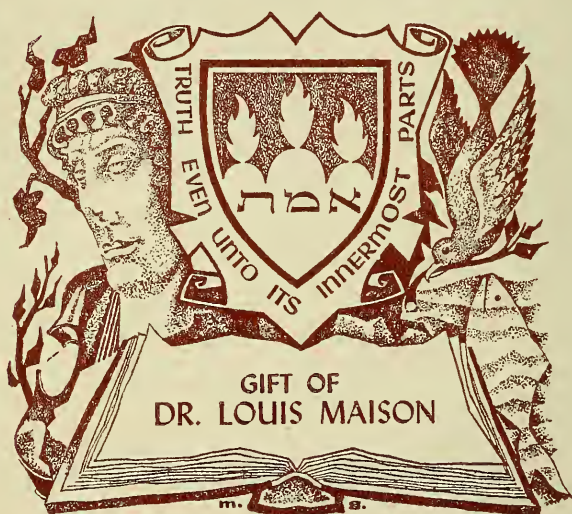




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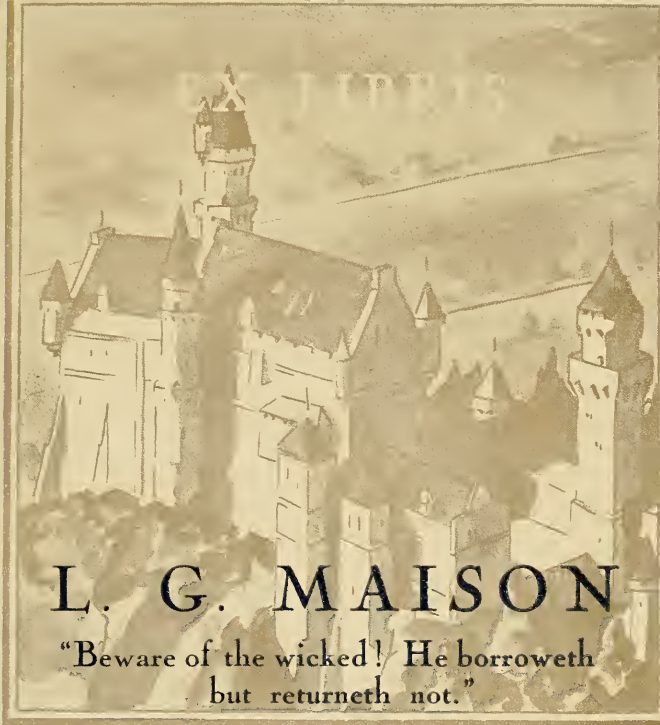













L. G. MAISON

"Beware of the wicked! He borroweth  
but returneth not."



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Mme Roland.

183.

Roland au Pélipon



AN  
APPEAL  
TO  
IMPARTIAL POSTERITY,

BY  
MADAME ROLAND,  
WIFE OF THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR;

OR,

A COLLECTION OF TRACTS

WRITTEN BY HER DURING HER CONFINEMENT IN THE PRISONS  
OF THE ABBEY, AND ST. PÉLAGIE, IN PARIS.

IN FOUR PARTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH ORIGINAL,

*Published for the Benefit of her only Daughter, deprived of the Fortune of  
her Parents by Sequestration.*

---

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

VOL. II.

Containing PART III. and IV.

---

May my last letter to my daughter fix her attention to that object which appears likely  
to become her essential duty; and may the remembrance of her mother attach her  
for ever to those virtues which afford consolation in all circumstances.

Extracted from the piece entitled *My Last Thoughts*, in Part II. p. 120.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1796.

1894

RECEIVED

DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON



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## PART THE THIRD.

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# PRIVATE MEMOIRS.

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### SECTION I.

Prison of St. Pélagie,  
Aug. 9, 1793.

**T**HE daughter of an artist, the wife of a man of letters (who afterwards became a minister, and remained an honest man), now a prisoner, destined perhaps to a violent and unexpected death, I have been acquainted with happiness and with adversity, I have seen glory at hand, and I have experienced injustice.

Born in an obscure station, but of honest parents, I spent my youth in the bosom of the fine arts, nourished by the charms of study, and ignorant of all superiority but that of merit, of all greatness but that of virtue.

Arrived at years of maturity, I lost all hopes of that fortune, which might have placed me in a condition suitable to the education I had received.

A marriage with a respectable man appeared to compensate this loss; it served to lay the foundation of new misfortunes.

A gentle disposition, a strong mind, a solid understanding, an extremely affectionate heart, and an exterior which announced these qualities, rendered me dear to all those with whom I was acquainted. The situation into which I have been thrown has created me enemies; personally I have none: to those who have spoken the worst of me I am utterly unknown.

It is so true that things are seldom what they appear to be, that the periods of my life in which I have felt the most pleasure, or experienced the greatest vexation, were often the very contrary of those that others might have supposed: the solution is, that happiness depends on the affections more than on events.

It is my purpose to employ the leisure of my captivity in retracing what has happened to me from my tenderest infancy to the present moment. Thus to tread over again all the steps of our career, is to live a second time; and what, in the gloom of a prison, can we do better than to transport our existence elsewhere by pleasing fictions, or by the recollection of interesting occurrences?

If we gain less experience by acting, than by reflecting on what we see and do, mine will be greatly augmented by my present undertaking.

Public affairs, and my own private sentiments, afforded me ample matter for thinking, and subjects enough for my pen, during two months imprisonment, without obliging me to have recourse to distant times. Accordingly, the first five weeks were devoted to my *Historic Notices*, which formed perhaps no uninteresting collection. They have just been destroyed; and I have felt all the bitterness of a loss, which I shall never repair. But I should despise myself, could I suffer my mind to sink in any circumstances whatever. In all the troubles I have experienced, the most lively impression of sorrow has been almost immediately accompanied by the ambition of opposing my strength to the evil, and of surmounting it, either by doing good to others, or by exerting my own fortitude to the utmost. Thus misfortune may pursue, but cannot overwhelm me; tyrants may persecute, but never, no never shall they debase me. My *Historic Notices* are gone: I mean to write my *Memoirs*; and, prudently accommodating myself to my weakness, at a moment when my feelings are acute, I shall talk of my own person, that my thoughts may be the less at home. I shall exhibit my fair and my unfavourable side with equal freedom. He who dares not speak well of himself is almost always a coward, who knows and dreads the ill that may be said of him; and he who hesitates to confess



his faults, has neither spirit to vindicate, nor virtue to repair them. Thus frank with respect to myself, I shall not be scrupulous in regard to others : father, mother, friends, husband, I shall paint them all in their proper colours, or in the colours at least in which they appeared to me.

While I remained in a quiet and retired station, my natural sensibility so absorbed my other qualities, that it displayed itself alone, or governed all the rest. My first objects were to please and to do good. I was a little like that good man, Mr. de Gourville, of whom Madame de Sévigné said, that the love of his neighbour cut off half his words ; nor was I undeserving of the character given me by Sainte-Lette, who said, that though possessed of wit to point an epigram, I never suffered one to escape my lips.

Since the energy of my character has been unfolded by circumstances, by political and other storms, my frankness takes place of every thing, without considering too nicely the little scratches it may give in its way. Still, however, I deal not in epigrams ; they indicate a mind pleased at irritating others by satirical observations ; and, as to me, I never yet could find amusement in killing flies. But I love to do justice by the utterance of truths, and refrain not from the most severe, in presence of the parties concerned, without suffering myself to be alarmed, or moved, or  
angry,

angry, whatever may be the effects they produce.

Gatien Phlipon, my father, was by profession an engraver ; he also professed painting, and applied himself to that in enamel, less from taste than expectation of profit : but the fire which enamelling requires, agreeing neither with his sight nor his constitution, he was obliged to relinquish that branch of the art. He confined himself therefore to the first, the profits of which were moderate. But, though he was industrious, though the times were favourable to the exercise of his art, though he had much business, and though he employed a considerable number of workmen, the desire of making a fortune induced him to enter into trade. He purchased diamonds, and other jewels, or took them in payment from the tradesmen who employed him, to sell them again when opportunities might occur. I mention this circumstance, because I have observed, that ambition is generally fatal to all classes of men ; for the few whose wishes it crowns with success, multitudes become its victims. The example of my father will afford me more than one application of this maxim. His art was sufficient to procure him a comfortable subsistence ; he went in pursuit of riches, and met with ruin on his way.

Strong and healthy, active and vain, he loved his wife, and was fond of dress. Without learning, he had that superficial degree of taste and

knowledge which the fine arts never fail to give, however inferior the line in which they are pursued. Accordingly, in spite of his regard for wealth, and whatever could procure it, though he trafficked with tradesmen, he formed connexions with artists, painters, and sculptors alone. He led a very regular life while his ambition was kept within bounds, and had suffered no reverse of fortune. He could not be said to be a virtuous man, but he had a great deal of what is called honour. He would have had no objection to selling a thing for more than it was worth, but he would have killed himself rather than not pay the stipulated price of what he had agreed to purchase.

Margaret Bimont, his wife, brought him, as a dower, very little money, but a heavenly mind, and a charming figure. The eldest of six children, to whom she had been a second mother, she married at six-and-twenty, only to resign her place to her sisters. Her affectionate heart and captivating mind ought to have procured her an union with a man of delicate feelings and an enlightened understanding; but her parents proposed to her an honest man, whose talents insured her a subsistence, and her reason accepted him. Instead of that happiness, which she could not expect, she was sensible that she should be able to attain domestic quiet, its most desirable substitute. It is a proof of wisdom to be able to contract our desires: enjoyments

ments are always more rare than is imagined ; but virtue is never without its consolation.

I was their second child. My father and mother had seven ; but all the rest died at nurse, or from accidents in coming into the world ; and my mother sometimes took a pleasure in remarking, that I was the only one from whom she had experienced no disaster ; for her delivery had been as happy as her pregnancy : it seemed as if I had contributed to establish her health.

An aunt of my father selected for me, in the neighbourhood of Arpajon, whither she made frequent excursions in the summer, a healthy and well-disposed nurse, who was much esteemed in the place, and the more so, because her husband's brutality rendered her unhappy, without making her alter her disposition or her conduct. Madame Bessard (for that was the name of my great aunt) had no children ; her husband was my godfather ; and they both looked upon me as their own daughter. Their kindness to me has been constant and invariable ; they are still alive, and in the decline of life are overwhelmed with sorrow, lamenting the fate of their darling niece, in whom they had placed their hopes and their glory. Aged and respectable friends, be comforted : it is given to few to complete their career in that silence and tranquillity which attend you. I am not unequal to the misfortunes that assail me, nor shall I ever cease to honour your virtues.



The vigilance of my nurse was encouraged or recompensed by the kindness of my good relations; her zeal and success procured her the friendship of my whole family; nor did she, as long as she lived, ever suffer two years to elapse, without taking a journey to Paris, on purpose to see me. She hastened to me when she heard that a cruel death had deprived me of my mother. I still recollect her sudden appearance: I was confined to my bed with affliction; and as her presence recalled a recent calamity, the first misfortune of my life, very forcibly to my mind, I fell into convulsions, which terrified her to such a degree, that she withdrew, and I saw her no more: soon after she died. I had been to visit her at the cottage in which she suckled me, and listened with emotion to the tales which her good-natured simplicity took a pleasure in telling, while pointing out the places I had preferred, and relating the tricks I had played her, with the frolicsome gaiety of which she was still entertained.—At two years of age I was brought home to my father's. I have frequently been told of the surprise I testified at the lighting of the lamps, which I called "Pretty bottles!" of my repugnance to make use of what is called a *pot-de-chambre*, for a purpose for which the corner of the garden had always served me; and of the air of ridicule with which I pointed to the salad-dishes and *terrenes*, asking if they too were made for the same use. These little anecdotes, and others

others of equal importance, interesting to nurses, and fit only to be related to uncles and aunts, shall be passed over in silence ; nor will it be expected that I should here depict a little brunette, of two years of age, whose dark hair fell in graceful ringlets over a face animated with a glowing complexion, and breathing the happiness of that age of which it wore the ruddy livery. I know a better moment for drawing my portrait, and I am not so injudicious as to anticipate it here.

The discretion, and other excellent qualities, of my mother, soon gave her an ascendancy over my mild and affectionate disposition, which she never employed but for my good. So great was this ascendancy, that, in those little disputes, unavoidable between authoritative reason and resisting infancy, she never found it necessary to inflict any other punishment than that of gravely calling me *Mademoiselle*, and fixing on me an eye of reproof. I still feel the impression made upon me by her look, at other times so affectionate ; I still hear, with a palpitating heart, the word *Mademoiselle* substituted, with heart-rending dignity, for the kind name of daughter, or the elegant appellation of *Manon*. Yes, *Manon* ; for so I was called. I am sorry for the lovers of romance : there is certainly nothing noble in the name, nor is it at all suitable to a heroine of the lofty kind ; but it was mine ; and, as an historian, I cannot disguise the truth :—besides,

sides, the ears of the most delicate would have been reconciled to this name, had they heard it pronounced by my mother, and seen the object to which it was addressed. What expression could want elegance, when conveyed in her affectionate tones? And when her touching voice made its way to my heart, did it not teach me to resemble so amiable a parent?

Lively, without being turbulent or troublesome, and naturally of a reflective turn of mind, I desired nothing more than to be employed, and readily laid hold of every idea that was held out to me. This disposition was turned to so good account, that I never remember having been taught to read. I have been told, that at four years old the business was in a manner completed, and that the trouble of teaching me was over at that epoch, since all that was in future necessary, was not to let me want a supply of books. Whatever they were that were put into my hands, or that I could anywhere meet with, they were sure to engross all my attention, which could no longer be called away by any thing but a nosegay. The sight of a flower delights my imagination, and flatters my senses to an inexpressible degree; it awakens me to a luxurious consciousness of my existence. Under the tranquil shelter of my paternal roof, I was happy from my infancy with flowers and books: in the narrow confines of a prison, amidst the  
chains

chains imposed by the most shocking tyranny, I forget the injustice of men, their follies, and my misfortunes, with books and flowers.

It was too good an opportunity of making me acquainted with the Old and New Testaments, and with the Catechism, both great and small, to be neglected. I learned every thing it was thought proper to give me, and should have repeated the Koran had I been taught to read it. I remember a painter of the name of Guibol, who afterwards settled at Studgard, and whose panegyric on Pouffin, which obtained the prize from the academy of Rouen, fell into my hands a few years ago. He used to come frequently to my father's, and was a merry fellow, who told me many extravagant tales, which I have not forgotten, and by which I was exceedingly amused; nor was he less diverted with making me display my slender stock of knowledge in my turn. I think I see him now, with a figure bordering on the grotesque, sitting in an armed chair, taking me between his knees, on which I rested my elbows, and making me repeat *St. Athanasius's creed*; then rewarding my compliance with the story of *Tanger*, whose nose was so long, that he was obliged, when he walked, to twist it round his arm: this is not the most absurd contrast that might be exhibited.

When seven years old, I was sent every Sunday to the parish-church, to attend *catechism*, as it is called, in order to prepare me for confirmation.

From



From the present course of things, it is possible that they who read this passage may ask what I mean. I will inform them. In the corner of a church, chapel, or charnel-house, a few rows of chairs, or benches, extending to a certain length, were placed opposite to each other. A sufficient opening was reserved in the middle, in which was placed a seat somewhat higher than the rest. This was the curule chair of the young priest, whose office it was to instruct the children that attended. They were made to repeat by heart the epistle and gospel for the day, the collect, and such a portion of the catechism as was appointed for their weekly task. When the children were numerous, the catechising priest had a little clerk, who heard them repeat their lessons, while the master took upon himself to explain the questions essential to the subject. In some parishes the children of both sexes attended together, and were only placed on separate forms; but in general their hours of instruction were entirely distinct. The pious matrons to whom the children belonged, always greedy of the bread of the word, however coarsely prepared, were present at these lectures, seated according to their ages, as well as at the preparation for being confirmed, and receiving the first communion. The zealous pastors also occasionally made their appearance amidst their young flock, who were taught to rise respectfully at their approach: They put a few questions to the best dressed, in  
order



order to ascertain the progress they had made. The mothers of those who were interrogated, were puffed up with pride at the distinction, and the reverend pastor withdrew in the midst of their obeisances. Mr. *Garat*, the rector of my parish, which was St. Bartholomew's, within the precinct of what was then called *the City*—a good sort of man, said to be very learned, though he could not deliver two words of common sense from the pulpit, in which he had the rage of exhibiting himself, much in the same manner as Mr. *Garat*, minister of state, is reputed a man of ability, though totally ignorant of his trade—Mr. *Garat*, my rector, came one day to the catechism; and, in order to sound the depth of my theological erudition, and display his own sagacity, asked me how many orders of spirits there were in the celestial hierarchy. From the ironical tone and air of triumph with which he put the question, I was persuaded that he expected to puzzle me. I answered, with a smile, that, though many were enumerated in the preface to the Missal, I had found from other books that there were nine; and so I marshalled before him in their proper order, the whole host of *angels, arch-angels, thrones, dominions, &c.* Never was priest so satisfied with the knowledge of his neophyte: it was quite enough to establish my reputation among all the devout matrons; and, accordingly, I became a chosen vessel, as hereafter will appear. Some persons perhaps will say, that, with my  
 mother's

mother's caution and good sense, it is astonishing that she should have sent me to these *catechisms* : but there is a reason for every thing. My mother had a younger brother, an ecclesiastic belonging to her parish, to whose care was committed the *catechism of confirmation*, to use the technical term. The presence of his niece was an admirable example, calculated to induce those who were not of what is called the lower order of the people, to send their children also : a circumstance that could not fail to be pleasing to the rector.—Besides, I had a memory which was sure to secure me the first rank ; and every thing else about me supporting this kind of superiority, my parents gratified their vanity, while appearing only to pursue the path of humility. It happened, that, in the distribution of prizes, which took place, with no small parade, at the end of the year, I obtained the first, without the least partiality being shown me : on this, all the grave churchwardens, and all the reverend clergy of the parish, congratulated my uncle ; who, in consequence of my success, began to be more noticed, which was all that was necessary to prepossess every one in his favour. A handsome person, the greatest good-nature, an easy temper, the most gentle manners, and the utmost gaiety, attended him to these latter times, when he died a canon of Vincennes, just as the revolution was about to abolish all ecclesiastical dignities. It seemed to me, as if I had lost the  
last

last of my relations on the maternal side, nor can I recollect a single circumstance respecting him without emotion. My eagerness to learn, and quickness of apprehension, suggested to him the idea of teaching me Latin. I was delighted with it; for it was a feast to me to find a new subject of study. I had at home masters for writing, geography, dancing, and music; and my father had made me begin drawing: but in all this I was far from finding an excess of occupation. Rising at five in the morning, when every body in the house was asleep, I stole softly, in my bed-gown, regardless of shoes or stockings, to a corner of my mother's chamber, where was the table on which my books were laid; and there I copied or repeated my lessons with such assiduity, that my progress was astonishing. My masters became in consequence more affectionate; gave me long lessons; and took such an interest in my instruction, as called forth on my part additional attention. I had not a single master who did not appear as much flattered by teaching me, as I was grateful for being taught; nor one who, after attending me for a year or two, was not the first to say, that his instructions were no longer necessary, and that he ought no longer to be paid; but that he should be glad of permission to visit my parents in order to converse with me now and then. I shall ever honour the memory of the good Mr. *Marchand*, who, when I was five years old, taught me to  
 write,

write, and afterwards instructed me in geography and history. He was a discreet, patient, clear-headed, and methodical personage, to whom I gave the nickname of Mr. *Demure*. I saw him married to a worthy woman, a dependant of the family of Nesle; and went to visit him in his last sickness, when a fit of the gout, translated to his chest by an injudicious bleeding, occasioned his death at the age of fifty.—I was then eighteen.

I have not forgotten my music-master, *Cajon*, a little, lively, talkative being, born at Macon, where he had been a singing-boy. He was afterwards by turns a soldier, a deserter, a capuchin friar, a clerk in a counting-house, and lastly a vagrant, arriving at Paris with his wife and children without a penny in his pocket; but he had a very pleasing counter voice, rarely to be met with in men who have not undergone a certain operation, and admirably adapted to the teaching of young persons to sing. Introduced to my father, I know not by whom, he had me for his first scholar. He bestowed on me considerable pains: frequently borrowed money of my parents, which was soon spent; never returned me a collection of lessons by Bordier, which he plundered with so much art, as to compile from it the *Elements of Music*, that he published in his own name; lived in great style without being rich, and, at the end of fifteen years, terminated his career by quitting Paris, where he had contracted heavy debts, and by repairing  
to



to Russia, where I know not what became of him.

Of *Mozon*, the dancing-master, an honest Savoyard, frightfully ugly, whose wen I think I still see embellishing his right cheek while he inclined his pock-fretted and flat-nosed visage to the left on his instrument, I might relate some humorous anecdotes; as well as of poor *Mignard*, my master for the guitar, a sort of Spanish Colossus, whose hands resembled those of Esau, and who, in gravity, over-strained politeness, and rodomontade, was inferior to none of his countrymen.

The timid *Wattin*, of fifty years of age, whose periwig, spectacles, and carbuncled face, seemed all in commotion while he was placing the fingers of his little scholar on the violoncello, and teaching her to hold her bow, did not continue long with me: but, on the other hand, the reverend father *Colomb*, a Barnabite, formerly a missionary, superior of his convent at the age of seventy-five, and my mother's confessor, sent his bass-viol to her house to console me for the desertion of my master of the violoncello, and, when he came to see us, accompanied me himself while I played on my guitar. He was not a little astonished, when one day, taking up his bass, I played a few airs that I had studied in private with tolerable execution. Had there been a double-bass in the house, I should have got up in a chair to try and make something of it. To avoid anachronism, however, it must be observed, that



I am here anticipating things, and that I am arrived in my narrative at the period only of seven years, to which I return.

I have advanced thus far without noticing my father's influence over my education. It was indeed trifling, for he interfered in it but little; but it may not be amiss to relate an occurrence that induced him to interfere still less.

I was extremely obstinate; that is to say, I did not readily consent to any thing of which I saw not the reason; and when the exercise of authority alone appeared, or I fancied that I perceived the dictates of caprice, I could not submit. My mother, sagacious and discreet, rightly judged that I must be governed by reason, or drawn by the cords of affection; and, treating me accordingly, experienced no opposition to her will. My father, hasty in his manner, issued his orders imperiously, and my compliance was either reluctant, or wholly withheld. If, despot-like, he attempted to punish me, his gentle little daughter was converted into a lion. On two or three occasions while he was whipping me, I bit the thigh across which I was laid, and protested against his injunctions. One day, when I was a little indisposed, it was thought proper that I should take physic. The nauseous draught was brought me; and I put it to my lips; but the smell alone made me reject it with abhorrence. My mother made use of all her influence to overcome my repugnance; she inspired me with the  
desire

desire of obeying her ; and I sincerely did my best ; but every time the horrid potion approached my nose, my senses revolted, and made me turn aside my head. My mother fatigued herself to no purpose ; I wept both for her sufferings and my own, and became still less capable of complying with her will. My father came, put himself into a passion, and, ascribing my resistance to stubbornness, resorted to the remedy of the rod. From that instant all desire of obedience vanished, and I declared that I would not take the medicine at all. A violent uproar, repeated threats, and a second whipping, followed. I was only the more indignant, uttering terrible cries, lifting up my eyes to heaven, and preparing to throw away the draught which they were about to present to me again. My gestures betrayed me ; and my father, in a rage, threatened to whip me a third time. I feel, while I write this, the revolution, and developement of fortitude, which took place in my mind. My tears ceased at once to flow, my fobblings were at an end, and a sudden calm concentrated my faculties into a single resolution. I raised myself, turned to the bed-side, leaned my head against the wall, lifted up my chemise, and exposed myself to the rod in silence. My father might have killed me on the spot, without drawing from me a single sigh.

My mother, who was dreadfully agitated by the scene, and who stood in need of all her pru-

dence not to increase my father's rage, at last got him out of the room: she then put me to bed without saying a word; and, when I had rested two hours, returned, and conjured me, with tears in her eyes, to give her no farther vexation, but to take the medicine. I looked stedfastly in her face, took the glass, and swallowed it at a draught. In a quarter of an hour, however, it was thrown up again; and I was seized with a violent paroxysm of fever, which it was found necessary to cure by other means than by nauseous drugs or by the rod. I was at that time little more than six years old.

All the circumstances of this scene are as present to my mind, all the sensations I experienced as distinct to my imagination, as if they had recently occurred. It was the same inflexible firmness that I have since felt on great and trying occasions; nor would it at this moment cost me more to ascend undauntedly the scaffold, than it did then to resign myself to brutal treatment, which might have killed, but could not conquer me.

From that instant my father never laid his hand upon me, nor did he even undertake to reprimand me; but, on the contrary, caressed me frequently, taught me to draw, took me out to walk, and treated me with a kindness that rendered him more respectable in my eyes, and insured him my entire submission. The seventh anniversary of my birth was celebrated as the attainment of the age of reason, when it might be expected of me to follow

follow its dictates. This was a politic sort of plea for observing towards me a more respectful treatment, that should give me confidence in myself, without exciting my vanity. My days flowed gently on in domestic quiet and in great activity of mind. My mother was almost always at home, and received little company. Two days in the week however we went abroad ; once to visit my father's relations, and once, which was on Sunday, to see my grandmother Bimont, to go to church, and to take a walk. The visit to my grandmother always took place as soon as vespers were over. She was a corpulent but handsome woman, who at an early age had suffered an attack of the palsy, from which her understanding had sustained a permanent injury. From that time she had gradually declined into a state of dotage, spending her days in her easy chair, either at the window or the fireside, according to the season. An old servant, who had been forty years in the family, had the care of her. The servant, whose name was Mary, regularly upon my entrance, gave me my afternoon's repast. So far all went well ; but when that was over, I grew dreadfully tired of the visit. I sought for books ; could find none but the Psalter ; and, for want of better, have twenty times read over the French, and chanted the Latin. When I was gay, my grandmother would weep ; if I fell down, or got a blow, she would burst into a fit of laughter. That did not please me. It was in vain to tell me



it was the effect of her disease: I did not find it on that account the less disagreeable. I could have borne with her laughing at me, but she never shed tears without their being accompanied by cries at once grievous and imbecile, which rent my heart and inspired me with terror. In the mean time old Mary indulged herself to her heart's content in the garrulity of age, with my mother, who considered it as a sacred duty to pass two hours with hers, while complaisantly listening to the servant's tales. This was no doubt a painful exercise of my patience; but I was forced to submit; for one day, when I cried for vexation, and begged to go away, my mother, as a punishment, staid the whole evening. Nor did she fail, at proper times, to represent her assiduity as a strict and becoming duty, in which it was honourable for me to participate. I know not how she managed it, but my heart received the lesson with emotion. When the Abbé Bimont could meet us at his mother's, my joy was inexpressible. That dear little uncle made me dance, and sing, and play; but unfortunately it was seldom in his power, as he was master of the choristers, and much confined to the house. This brings to my mind one of his pupils, a lad of a prepossessing countenance, whom he was fond of praising, because he was the scholar that gave him the least trouble. His promising disposition obtained him, a few years after, an exhibition at some college, and he is now no other than the Abbé *Noel*,  
known



known at first by some little productions, employed afterwards by the minister Le Brun in the diplomatic line, envoy last year at London, and now in Italy.

My studies completely occupied my days, which seemed very short; for I had never time to get through all that I was inclined to undertake. Together with the elementary books, with which care had been taken to supply me, I soon exhausted all those that the little family library contained. I devoured every volume, and began the same over again, when no new ones were to be got. I remember two folio lives of the saints, a bible of the same size in an old version, a translation of Appian's civil wars, and a description of Turkey written in a wretched style, all of which I read over and over again. I also found the Comical Romance of Scarron; some collections of pretended bon mots, on which I did not bestow a second perusal; the memoirs of the brave De Pontis, which diverted me much; those of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, whose pride did not displease me; and several other antiquated works; the contents, binding, and spots of which I have still before my eyes. The passion for learning possessed me indeed to such a degree, that, having picked up a treatise on the art of heraldry, I set myself instantly to study it. It had coloured plates, with which I was diverted, and I was glad to know the names of all the little figures they contained. My father was astonished when,

soon after, I gave him a specimen of my science, by making some remarks on a seal that was not engraved agreeably to the rules of art. On this subject I became his oracle, nor did I ever mislead him. A short treatise on contracts fell into my hands; and this also I endeavoured to learn; for I read nothing which I was not desirous of retaining: but it tired me so soon, that I did not get to the fourth chapter.

The Bible had peculiar attraction for me; and I returned frequently to its perusal. In the old translations it speaks as plain a language as that of the sons of Esculapius; and certain crude and simple expressions struck me so forcibly, that they have never since escaped my memory. Hence I derived information not usually given to girls of my age; but I saw it in a light that was far from seducing. I had too much employment for my thoughts to dwell upon things of a mere material nature, that seemed to me to have nothing attractive about them. I could not however help laughing, when my grandmama talked to me of little children dug out of the parsley-bed; and I used to say, that my Ave-Maria informed me they came from another place, without troubling my head how they got there.

In rummaging the house I found a source of reading which I husbanded for a considerable time. What my father called his work-shop was adjoining to the apartment where I usually sat,  
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which was a handsome room, that might not improperly have been styled a drawing-room, but which my mother modestly called a parlour, neatly furnished, and ornamented with looking-glasses and a few pictures. It was here I received my lessons. The recess on one side of the fire-place was converted into a light closet, in which was placed a bed, so confined for want of room that I was obliged to get into it at the foot; a chair, a small table, and a few shelves. That was my sanctuary. On the opposite side was a large room, serving as a work-shop, my father having placed in it his bench, various pieces of sculpture, and the different instruments of his art. Thither I used to steal in an evening, or at hours of the day when all were absent. I had there remarked a recess where one of the young men kept his books; a volume of which I carried off at a time, and hastened to my little closet to devour it, taking great care to put it in its place again, without saying a word of the matter to any one. They were in general very good books. One day I perceived that my mother had made the same discovery as myself. Recognising a volume in her hands which had previously passed through mine, I no longer felt myself under any restraint; and, without telling a falsehood, but at the same time without saying a word concerning what had passed, I seemed to be only following her example. The young man, whose name was Courson, to  
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which he afterwards prefixed the *de*\*, when he contrived to get into place at Versailles as teacher to the pages, did not at all resemble his comrades: he was not destitute of politeness, was decent in his demeanour, and fond of study. He said nothing of the occasional disappearance of his books; so that it seemed as if there were a tacit agreement between all the parties. In this way I read a great many volumes of travels, of which I was passionately fond; among others, those of Renard, which were the first; some plays of second-rate authors, and Dacier's Plutarch. This last work was more to my taste than any thing I had yet seen, not excepting even pathetic stories, which however affected me much; as for instance, that of the unfortunate couple, by Labedoyère, which is still present to my mind, although I have never read it since that early period. But Plutarch seemed to be exactly the intellectual food that suited me. I shall never forget the Lent of 1763, at which time I was nine years of age, when I carried it to church instead of the Exercises of the Holy Week. It is from that period that I may date the impressions and ideas which rendered me a republican, without my dreaming of ever becoming one.

Telemachus, and Jerusalem Delivered, interfered a little with the current of these majestic thoughts. The tender Fenelon moved my heart, and Tasso

\* *De* before a name in France was generally the symbol of a noble family.—*Transf.*



fired my imagination. Sometimes I read aloud at my mother's request, of which I was by no means fond, as it diverted me from that close attention which constituted my delight, and obliged me to proceed with less rapidity. But I would have plucked out my tongue rather than have read in that manner the episodes of the island of Calypso, and a number of passages in Tasso. My respiration quickened, a sudden glow overspread my countenance, and an agitation followed, which my faltering voice would have betrayed. With Telemachus I was Eucharis, and Herminia with Tancred. Completely transformed into these heroines, I thought not as yet of being something myself with some other personage. None of my reflections came home to me. I look around me for nothing. I was the very characters themselves, and saw only the objects which existed on their account. It was a kind of waking dream, that led to nothing more substantial. I recollect however having seen with considerable emotion a young painter of the name of *Taboral*, who came occasionally to my father's house. He was about twenty, his voice was soft, his features languishing, and he blushed like a girl. When I heard him in the work-shop, I had always a crayon or something else to seek; but as the sight of him embarrassed no less than it pleased me, I ran out again more speedily than I entered, with a palpitation of my heart and a trembling of my limbs that I hastened to conceal in my little closet. I can readily believe, that, with such  
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a disposition, assisted by leisure and a certain kind of company, both my imagination and my person might have been greatly affected.

The works of which I have been speaking gave place to others, which softened the powerful impressions they had produced. Some of the writings of Voltaire served to operate this diversion. One day, when I was reading *Candide*, my mother having deserted her party of piquet, the lady with whom she was playing calling me from the corner in which I was sitting, desired to see the book I had in my hand; and on my mother's return expressed her astonishment at the nature of my studies. My mother, without making any answer, contented herself with merely ordering me to carry it back to the place whence it came. I cast an evil eye upon this woman, of forbidding countenance, monstrous rotundity of waist, and affected importance; nor from that day forward did I ever bestow a smile upon Madame Charbonné. My good mother, however, made no alteration in her truly unaccountable conduct, but permitted me to read all the books I could lay my hands on, without seeming to attend to them, though she knew very well what they were. I must observe at the same time, that no immoral publication ever came in my way; and even now I am only acquainted with the titles of two or three; the taste I have acquired having ever prevented my feeling the smallest temptation to procure them. As I preferred books to every thing else, my father sometimes made me presents of that kind; but,

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piquing himself, as he did, on seconding my propensity to serious studies, his choice was whimsical: he gave me, for instance, Fenelon on female education, and Locke on that of children in general; thus putting into the hands of the pupil what were designed for the tutor. I am persuaded, however, that the incongruity was not unproductive of benefit, and that chance perhaps served me better than the usual considerations of propriety would have done. I was very forward for my age; I loved to reflect; I thought seriously of improving myself; that is to say, I studied the movements of my mind; I sought to know myself; and I felt that I had a destination which it was requisite I should enable myself to fill. Religious notions began to ferment in my brain, and soon produced a violent explosion. But before I describe them, it may be proper for my reader to know what became of my Latin.

The first rudiments of grammar were well arranged in my head. I declined nouns and conjugated verbs, though it appeared to me tiresome enough; but the hope of being able on some future day to read in that language the admirable productions of which I heard so much, and of which my books afforded me some idea, gave me resolution to get through the dry and difficult task. It was not thus with my little uncle, for so I called the Abbé Bimont. Young, good-humoured, indolent, and gay, giving not the smallest trouble to any body, caring little to give himself any for others, and  
heartily

heartily tired of his trade of pedagogue with the choristers ; he liked better to take a walk with me than to give me a lesson, and to make me laugh and play, than to hear me repeat my rudiments. He was far from being punctual either as to the hour or the day of coming to our house, and a thousand circumstances combined to procrastinate his lessons. I was desirous however of learning, and loath to relinquish what I had once begun. It was therefore resolved upon, that I should go to him three mornings a week ; but he was too giddy to keep himself at liberty to devote a few moments to my instruction. I was sure to find him either busied in parish affairs, diverting himself with his boys, or breakfasting with a friend. I lost my time, the winter season came on, and my Latin was abandoned. From that attempt I have preserved only a sort of glimmering or instinct of knowledge, which, during the days of devotion, enabled me to repeat or chant the Psalms without being absolutely ignorant of what I was saying, and a considerable facility for the study of languages in general, particularly the Italian, which I learnt a few years after, without a master, and without difficulty.

My father took but little pains to forward me in drawing : he rather amused himself with my aptitude, than endeavoured to give me extraordinary talents. A few words that dropped in a conversation with my mother, gave me to understand that, from prudential motives, she was not desirous of my  
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making any great proficiency in the art. 'I would not have her become a painter,' said she; 'it would require an intercommunity of studies, and connexions that we can very well dispense with.' I was also set to engrave; learnt to hold the graver, and got over the first difficulties in a short time; for nothing came amiss to me. On the birth-days of my good old relations, which were always religiously celebrated, I carried for my present, either a pretty head, which I had been at great pains to draw for the occasion, or a neat little copper-plate, on which I had engraved a flower, with a compliment beneath, written with great care, and in verses hammered out by *Mr. Demure*. In return I received almanacs\*, which greatly amused me, and presents of such little articles as were adapted to my use, in general ornaments of dress, of which I was very fond. My mother took a pleasure in seeing me fine. In her own dress she was plain, and frequently even negligent; but her daughter was her doll, and from my early infancy I was dressed with a degree of elegance, and even richness, that seemed unsuitable to my condition. Young ladies at that time wore what was called a *corps-de-robe*, a dress resembling court robes, and fitting very

\* French almanacs are very different from the English: most of them are without calendars, such as *l'Almanach Chantant*, consisting entirely of songs, *l'Almanach des Muses*, containing a mixture of fugitive pieces in prose and verse, &c.—*Transf.*

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closely at the waist, of which it displayed the form to advantage, but full below, with a long train that swept the ground, adorned with different trimmings, according to the taste of the wearer. Mine were of fine silk, of some simple pattern and modest colour, but in price and quality equal to my mother's best gala suits. My toilet was a grievous business to me, for my hair was frequently frizzed, papered, and tortured with hot irons, and all the other ridiculous and barbarous implements at that time in use. My head was so extremely tender, and the pulling I was obliged to undergo so painful, that, upon occasions of full dress, my sufferings always forced tears from my eyes, although I uttered no complaint.

Methinks I hear it asked, For whose eyes, in the retired life I led, was all this finery intended? They who ask the question ought to recollect, that I went out two days in the week; and if they were acquainted with the manners of what was at that time called the *bourgeoisie* of Paris, they must know there were thousands of them whose expence in dress, by no means small, had no other object, than an exhibition of a few hours on Sunday in the *Tuileries*; to which their wives joined the display of their finery at church, and the pleasure of parading their own quarter of the town, before their admiring neighbours. Add to this, family visits on great festivals, new year's day, weddings and christenings, and there will



will be found sufficient opportunities for the gratification of vanity. By the way, more than one contrast may be observed in my education. The young lady, exhibited on Sundays at church, and in the public walks, in an elegant dress, who you would have supposed to be just alighted from a carriage, and whose demeanour and language were perfectly consonant to her appearance, would go nevertheless to market in the week with her mother, in a linen frock, or would step into the street alone, to buy a little parsley or salad, which the servant had forgotten. It must be confessed, I was not much pleased with it; but I showed no signs of dislike, and acquitted myself of my commission in such a way as to render it agreeable. I behaved with so much civility, and at the same time with so much dignity, that the fruiterer, or other shop-keeper, took a pleasure in serving me first; and yet those who came before me were never offended: I was sure to pick up some compliment or other in the way, which only served to make me more polite. The same child, who read systematic works, who could explain the circles of the celestial sphere, handle the crayon and the graver, and who, at eight years of age, was the best dancer in the youthful parties that met occasionally to assist at some little family festival, was frequently called into the kitchen to make an omelet, pick herbs, or skim the pot. That mixture of serious studies, agreeable relaxations, and domestic cares,

properly ordered, and rendered agreeable by my mother's good management, made me fit for every thing, seemed to forebode the vicissitudes of my fortune, and enabled me to support them. In every place I am at home : I can prepare my own dinner with as much address as Philopœmen cut wood ; but no one seeing me so engaged, would think it an office in which I ought to be employed.

It may be supposed, from what I have already related, that my mother did not neglect what is called religion. She was pious without being a bigot ; she had faith, or endeavoured to have faith ; and conformed her conduct to the rules of the church with the humility and regularity of a person who, finding it necessary for her peace of mind to adopt great principles, does not hesitate at trifling details. The respectful air with which the first notions of religion had been presented to me, had disposed me to receive them with attention. They were of a nature calculated to make considerable impression on a lively imagination ; and notwithstanding the troublesome doubts frequently excited by my infant reason, which regarded with surprise the transformation of the devil into a serpent, and thought it cruel in God to have permitted it, I at last believed and adored.

I had received confirmation with the deep attention of a mind that calculates the importance of its actions, and meditates on its duties. The preparing

paring me for my first communion was talked of, and I felt a sacred terror take possession of my soul.

I read books of devotion; I was seized with an irresistible desire to employ my mind about the great objects of eternal misery and happiness; and, by insensible degrees, all my thoughts centred in those points. Religious ideas gained a complete ascendance over my heart, and concurred with my natural forwardness in bringing on the reign of sentiment before its time. It began with the love of God, the sublime raptures of which rendered the first years of my adolescence safe and happy, resigned the rest to the care of philosophy, and seemed likely to protect me for ever from the storm of those passions, from which, with a constitution as vigorous as that of a prize-fighter, it is with difficulty that I preserve my riper age.

The fit of devotion which agitated me, produced an astonishing alteration in my mind. I became profoundly humble and inexpressibly timid. I looked upon men with a sort of terror, which increased when any of them struck me as amiable. I watched over my thoughts with extreme scrupulosity; the least profane image that offered itself to my mind, however confusedly, seemed a crime. I contracted such a habit of reserve, that, perusing Buffon's Natural History at the age of sixteen, when no longer a devotee, I skipped the article Man, and turned over the plates relating to it, with the speed and terror of a person who sees a precipice

precipice beneath his feet. In short, I did not marry till I was twenty-five; and with a heart such as may be imagined, senses highly inflammable, and considerable information as to several points, I had so well avoided all knowledge concerning one circumstance, that the consequences of marriage were as surprising to me as they were unpleasant.

My life, which every day grew more and more retired, appeared still too worldly to admit of my preparing for my first communion. That important transaction, which was to have such influence on my eternal salvation, occupied all my thoughts. I acquired a taste for divine service; I was struck with its solemnity; I read with avidity the explanation of the church ceremonies, and treasured up their mystic signification in my mind. Every day I turned over my folio Lives of the Saints, and regretted those happy days when the persecuting fury of paganism conferred the crown of martyrdom upon courageous christians. I began to think seriously of embracing a new kind of life, and, after profound meditations, fixed upon my plan. Until then, the idea of parting from my mother used to draw a flood of tears from my eyes; and whenever any of my friends wished to divert themselves with the sudden clouds that sensibility spread over my expressive brow, they never failed to talk of convents, and of the propriety of sending young women to inhabit them for a short space of time. But what ought we not to sacrifice to the Lord? I had formed,

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of the solitude and silence of a cloister, those grand or romantic ideas which an active imagination would naturally engender. The more solemn its abode, the better it suited the enthusiastic disposition of my mind. One evening, after supper, being alone with my parents, I fell at their feet, shedding at the same time a torrent of tears, which deprived me of utterance. Astonished and uneasy, they asked the meaning of this strange emotion. ‘I beg of you,’ said I, sobbing, ‘to do a thing, which is most painful to my heart, but which is called for by my conscience. Send me to a convent.’ They raised me from the ground. My excellent mother was affected, and no doubt would have been alarmed, if my having been constantly in her presence for some time before, had not removed all grounds of fear : she asked me what it was that made me desirous of leaving them, observing at the same time, I had never been refused any reasonable request. I answered, it was my wish to receive the communion for the first time in a disposition of mind suitable to the solemnity of the occasion. My father commended my zeal, and expressed his readiness to comply with my desire. The next difficulty was, the making a choice among the different religious houses, in none of which my parents had any connexions ; but they recollected that my music-master had spoken of a convent in which he gave lessons to several young ladies, and resolved to make inquiry concerning it. They found it to



be a respectable house, and of an order not very strict. The nuns had consequently the reputation of not practising those extravagancies and mummeries for which nuns are generally remarkable : the education of youth was also their profession. They kept a day-school for children of the lower class, whom they taught *gratis*, in conformity with their vows, and who came from their own homes to a room set apart for them ; the boarding-school for such young women as were confided to their care, being entirely detached.

My mother took the necessary steps ; and after carrying me to visit all my relations of the superior degree, and informing them of my resolution, which was highly commended, conducted me to the sisterhood of the Congregation, in the Rue Neuve St. Etienne, Fauxbourg St. Marceau, very near the prison in which I am now confined. While pressing my dear mother in my arms at the moment of parting with her for the first time in my life, I thought my heart would have burst ; but I was acting in obedience to the voice of God, and passed the threshold of the cloister, offering up to him, with tears, the greatest sacrifice I was capable of making. That was the seventh of May 1765, when I was *eleven years* and two months old.

In the gloom of a prison, in the midst of those political commotions which ravage my country, and sweep away all that is dear to me, how shall I recall to my mind, and how describe, that period  
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of rapture and tranquillity? What lively colours can express the soft emotions of a young heart endued with tenderness and sensibility, greedy of happiness, beginning to be alive to the feelings of nature, and perceiving the Deity alone? The first night that I spent at the convent was a night of agitation. I was no longer under the paternal roof. I was at a distance from that kind mother, who was doubtless thinking of me with affectionate emotion. A dim light diffused itself through the room in which I had been put to bed, with four children of my own age. I stole softly from my couch, and drew near the window, the light of the moon enabling me to distinguish the garden, which it overlooked. The deepest silence prevailed around, and I listened to it, if I may use the expression, with a sort of respect. Lofty trees cast their gigantic shadows along the ground, and promised a secure asylum to peaceful meditation. I lifted up my eyes to the heavens; they were unclouded and serene. I imagined that I felt the presence of the Deity smiling on my sacrifice, and already offering me a reward in the consolatory peace of a celestial abode. Tears of delight flowed gently down my cheeks. I repeated my vows with holy ecstasy, and went to bed again to taste the slumber of the elect.

As it was evening when I came to the convent, I had not yet seen all my fellow-boarders. They were thirty-four in number, and were as-

sembled in one school-room, from the age of six to that of seventeen or eighteen, but were divided into two tables at meals, and as it were into two sections in the course of the day, to perform their exercises. There was so much of the little woman about me, that it was immediately judged proper to include me in the elder set. I accordingly became the twelfth at their table, and found myself the youngest of them all. The tone of politeness which my mother had rendered familiar, the sedate air which was become habitual to me, and my courteous and correct mode of speaking, in no way resembled the noisy and thoughtless mirth of my volatile companions. The children addressed themselves to me with a sort of confidence, because I never gave them a rough answer; and the elder girls treated me with a kind of respect, because my reserve did not render me the less obliging to them, while it procured particular attention from the nuns. Brought up as I had hitherto been, it was not surprising I should be found better informed than most of my class, even than those whose age the most exceeded mine. The nuns perceived they might derive honour from my education, merely from my being under their care, without being obliged to take any pains to continue it. I knew already, or very easily learnt every thing they gave me to study; and became the favourite of the whole sisterhood: it was quite matter of contention who should

should carefs and compliment me. She, whose business it was to teach the boarders to write, was seventy years of age, and had taken the veil at fifty, either out of chagrin at some disappointment, or in consequence of some misfortune. She had been well educated, and joined to that advantage all that could be derived from good breeding and a knowledge of the world. She valued herself on her skill in teaching, still wrote a very fine hand, embroidered with elegance, gave excellent lessons of orthography, and was by no means unacquainted with history. Her diminutive figure, her age itself, and some small tincture of pedantry, occasioned old sister St. Sophia to be treated, by her giddy little pupils, with less respect than she deserved; and if I recollect aright, the jealousy of the good nuns, who were fond of exposing her defects because they did not possess her talents, tended not a little to encourage their impertinence. This excellent woman soon became much attached to me on account of my studious turn. After having given a lesson to the whole class, she would take me aside, make me repeat my grammar, go over my maps, and extract passages from history. She even obtained permission to take me to her cell, where I used to read to her.

Of my former tutors I had retained only one, and that was my music-master, of whom I received lessons in the parlour, with two of my fellow-boarders, under the inspection of a nun: and in  
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order to keep up my drawing, I was attended by a female artist, who was admitted into the interior of the convent.

The regularity of a life filled up with such a variety of studies, was perfectly suitable to the activity of my mind, as well as to my natural taste for method and application. I was one of the first at every thing ; and still I had leisure, because I was diligent, and did not lose a moment of my time. In the hours set apart for walking and recreation, I felt no desire to run and play with the crowd, but retired to some solitary spot to read and meditate. How delighted was I with the beauty of the foliage, the breath of the zephyrs, and the fragrance of the surrounding flowers ! Everywhere I perceived the hand of the Deity ; I was sensible of his beneficent care of his creatures ; and I admired his wonderful works. Full of gratitude, I went to adore him in the church, where the majestic sounds of the organ, accompanied by the captivating voices of the young nuns chanting their anthems, completed my ecstasy. Independently of mass, to which all the boarders were regularly conducted in the morning, half an hour in the afternoon of every working day was consecrated to meditation, to which those only were admitted who appeared capable of it, or at least of filling up that interval of time by the attentive reading of religious works. It was not even necessary for me to solicit this favour, which they were eager  
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to confer upon me as a recompence for my zeal : but I earnestly requested to be allowed to receive my first communion at the next great festival, which happened to be the Assumption. Though it followed soon after my entrance into the convent, my request was granted with the unanimous consent of the superiors, and of the director. The latter was a man of good sense, and a monk of the monastery of St. Victor, where he officiated as rector. He had undertaken the task of confessing the boarders of the Congregation, and was well fitted for it by his age, which was upwards of fifty, by the mildness of his temper, and by his great good sense, which tempered the austerity of his morals and demeanour. At the time I was confided to his care, Mr. *Garat*, the priest of my parish, had the condescension to come himself to the convent to deposit his tender lamb in the hands of his spiritual brother. They had an interview in the parlour in my presence, and conversed in Latin, which I did not perfectly understand, but of which I comprehended a few words very much to my advantage. These never escape the penetration of a female, whatever may be her age, or the language in which they are uttered. I gained considerably by the change. *Garat* was a mere pedant, in whom I should have found all the sternness of a spiritual judge : the monk of St. Victor was an upright and enlightened man, who directed my pious affections to all that is great and sublime

sublime in morality ; and who took a pleasure in developing the germs of virtue, by the instrumentality of religion, without any absurd mixture of its mysticism. I loved him as much as if he had been my father ; and during the three years that he survived, after my quitting the convent, went regularly from a considerable distance to St. Victor's, on the eve of great festivals, to confess myself to him.

It cannot be denied, that the catholic religion, though little suited to a sound judgment and an enlightened mind, that subjects its faith to the rules of reason, is well calculated to captivate the imagination, which it lays hold of by means of the grand and the terrific, while at the same time it occupies the senses by mysterious ceremonies, alternately soothing and melancholy. Eternity, always present to the mind of its sectaries, calls them to contemplation. It renders them scrupulous appreciators of good and evil, while its daily practices and awful rites serve both to keep up the attention, and offer the easy means of advancing towards the end proposed. Women are wonderful adepts in giving a grace to those practices, and in accompanying rites with whatever can add to their charms and splendour — an art in which nuns particularly excel. A novice took the veil soon after my arrival at the convent. The church and the altar were decorated with flowers, brilliant lustres, silk curtains, and other  
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rich ornaments. The assembly was numerous, and came crowding into the outer part of the church, with that festive air, which a family usually affects on such an occasion, as if it were the wedding of one of the children. The young victim appeared at the grate in the most splendid dress, which however she soon pulled off, to appear again covered with a white veil, and crowned with roses. I still feel the agitation which her slightly tremulous voice excited in my bosom, when she melodiously chanted the customary verse, *Elegit, &c. Here have I chosen my abode, and will establish it for ever.* I have not forgotten the notes of this little passage; but can repeat them as accurately as if I had heard them only yesterday; and happy should I be if I could chant them in America! Great God! with what emphasis should I utter them now!—But when the novice, after pronouncing her vows, was covered, as she lay prostrate on the ground, with a pall, under which one might have supposed her to be buried, I trembled with horror. To me it represented the image of an absolute dissolution of every earthly tie, and the renunciation of all that was dear to her. I was no longer myself: I was the very victim of the sacrifice. I thought they were tearing me from my mother, and shed a torrent of tears. With sensibility like this, which renders impressions so profound, and occasions so many things to strike us, that pass away like shadows before the eyes of the vulgar,

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our existence never grows languid. Accordingly, I have reflected on mine from an early period, without having ever found it a burden, even in the midst of the severest trials; and though not yet forty, I have lived to a prodigious age, if life be measured by the sentiment which has marked every moment of its duration.

I should have too many scenes of a similar nature to recount, were I to go over all which the emotions of a tender piety have engraven on my heart. The charm and habit of these sensations made an impression upon me which nothing can efface. Philosophy has dispelled the illusions of an empty faith, but it has not annihilated the effect of certain objects on my senses, or their association with the ideas and disposition of mind which they were accustomed to excite. I can still attend divine service with pleasure, if performed with solemnity. I forget the quackery of priests, their ridiculous fables and absurd mysteries, and see nothing but weak mortals assembled together to implore the succour of the Supreme Being. The miseries of mankind, and the consolatory hope of an omnipotent remunerator, occupy my thoughts. Every extraneous idea is excluded; the passions subside into tranquillity, and the sense of my duties is quickened. If music form a part of the ceremony, I find myself transported to another world; and I come out with an amended heart from a place, to which the imbecil and  
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ignorant crowd resort, without reflection, to adore a morsel of bread. It is with religion as with many other human institutions : it does not change the disposition of an individual, but assimilates itself to his nature, and they are together exalted or enfeebled. The herd of mankind think but little, take every thing on hearsay, and act from instinct ; so that there prevails a perpetual contradiction between the principles they admit, and the conduct they pursue. Strong minds proceed upon a different plan ; they require consistency, and their actions are a faithful transcript of their faith. In my infancy, I necessarily embraced the creed that was offered me : it was mine, until my mind was sufficiently enlightened to examine it ; but even then all my actions were in strict conformity with it's precepts. I was astonished at the levity of those, who, professing a similar faith, acted in a contrary way ; in like manner as I am now indignant at the cowardice of men, who would wish to see their country free, and yet set a value upon life when an opportunity offers of risking it for the public weal.

Though wishing to avoid repetitions upon the same subject, I will nevertheless relate an incident that marks the situation of my mind at the moment of my first communion. Prepared by all the means customary in convents, by retirement, long prayers, silence, and meditation, I considered it as a solemn engagement, and the pledge of eternal felicity.

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This idea engrossed the whole of my attention. It so inflamed my imagination, and softened my heart to such a degree, that, bathed in tears, and enraptured with divine love, I was incapable of walking to the altar without the assistance of a nun, who came and took me under both arms, and helped me to advance to the sacred table. These demonstrations, which were by no means affected, but the natural consequence of a sentiment I could not repress, obtained me great consideration, and all the good old women I met upon my way were sure to recommend themselves to my prayers.

Methinks I hear my reader ask, if this heart so tender, this extreme sensibility, were not at length exercised on more substantial objects ; and whether these early dreams of bliss were not afterwards realised by a passion, of which some happy individual shared the fruits?

To all this my answer is, let us not anticipate. Dwell with me awhile upon those peaceful days of holy delusion. Think you that, in an age so corrupt, and in a social order so perverse, it is possible to taste the delights of nature and innocence? Vulgar souls indeed may find pleasure in such an age; but as to those for whom pleasure alone would be too little, impelled on the one hand by passions that promise them more, and restrained on the other by duties which they are bound to respect, however absurd and severe, their enjoyments consist of little else but the  
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dear-bought glory of sacrificing the feelings of nature to the tyrannical institutions of mankind. Let us then, for the present, seek repose of spirit in the pure joys of friendship, which came to offer me its comforts, and to which I have been indebted for so many happy days.

Some months had elapsed since my arrival at the convent, where I spent my time in the way described above. Once a week I was visited by my parents, who took me out on Sundays, after divine service, to walk in the *Jardin du Roi*, now called *le Jardin des Plantes*. I never quitted them without shedding tears, which proceeded from affection to their persons, and not from dislike to my situation; for I returned with pleasure to the silent cloisters, and walked through them with measured steps, the better to enjoy their solitude. Sometimes I would stop at a tomb, on which the eulogy of a pious maiden was engraved. ‘She is happy!’ said I to myself, with a sigh: and then a melancholy, which was not without its charms, would take possession of my soul, and make me long to be received into the bosom of the Deity, where I hoped to find that perfect felicity of which I felt the want.

The arrival of new boarders was an event which put all our youthful spirits on the wing, the curiosity of girls in a convent being stronger upon such occasions than can well be imagined. Young ladies from Amiens had been announced. It was

on a summer's evening, and we were walking down an avenue of trees, when the exclamation, 'There they are! there they are!' passed suddenly from mouth to mouth. The principal mistress committed the strangers to the care of the nun whose business at that time it happened to be to superintend the boarders. The crowd gathered round them, walked away, returned again, fell at length into regular order, and paraded up and down the same walk in parties to examine the Miss Cannets. They were two sisters. The eldest was about eighteen, of a fine shape, a forward air, and easy carriage, and was rendered remarkable by something about her which indicated at the same time sensibility, pride, and discontent. The youngest was not more than fourteen: a veil of white gauze covered her charming countenance, and ill concealed the tears in which it was bathed. I felt a liking for her at first sight, stopped to get a better view of her person, and then mixed with the talkers to inquire what they knew of her.

She was the favourite, they said, of her mother, whom she tenderly loved, and with whom she was so loth to part, that her sister had been sent with her in order to enable her the better to bear the separation. Both were seated at supper at the same table with me. Sophia ate but little. Her mute grief was no way repulsive, and could not fail to inspire every body with concern. Her sister appeared less occupied in consoling her, than dissatisfied with  
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sharing her lot. Nor was she altogether in the wrong. A girl of eighteen, torn from the world, to which she had been restored, in order to return to a convent as her sister's companion, might naturally enough consider herself as sacrificed by her mother; who in fact had nothing in view but to curb an impetuous temper, which she found herself unable to govern. It was not necessary to be long in the company of the lively Henrietta to discover these things. Frank even to rudeness, impatient even to irascibility, and gay even to folly, she had all the spirit of her age without having any of its reason. Capricious, flighty, sometimes charming, and often insupportable, her bursts of passion were succeeded by the most affectionate atonements. She joined to extreme sensibility the utmost extravagance of imagination. You could not avoid loving, even while you scolded her; and yet it was difficult to live with her upon terms of endearment. Poor Sophia had much to suffer from the disposition of her sister, irritated against her from feelings of jealousy, too just at the same time not to esteem her as she deserved, and consequently finding in their intercourse every thing that could tend to provoke that unevenness of temper, which she herself was the first to lament. The sedateness of premature reason was Sophia's principal characteristic. Her feelings were not very acute, because her head was cool and composed: but she loved to reason and reflect. Gentle, without being forward in her de-



monstrations of kindness, she courted nobody's good-will, but obliged every body when an opportunity occurred, never anticipating nor ever opposing the wish of other people. She was fond both of working and reading. Her sorrows had affected me ; I was pleased with her demeanour ; I felt that I had met with a companion ; and we became inseparable. I attached myself to her with that unreserve which is so natural when we are in want of an object on which to place our affections, and meet with a person who seems fit to fill up the vacancy in our heart. Working, reading, walking, all my occupations and amusements were shared with Sophia. She was of a religious turn, somewhat less tender than I, but equally sincere ; and that resemblance between us contributed not a little to our intimacy. It was, if I may so express myself, under the wing of Providence, and in the transports of a common zeal, that our friendship was cultivated : we wished reciprocally to support and forward each other in the road to perfection. Sophia was an unmerciful reasoner : she wanted to analyse, to discuss, to know every thing. I talked much less, and laid little stress upon any thing but results. She took a pleasure in conversing with me, for I was an adept at listening : and when I differed from her in opinion, my opposition was so gentle, for fear of offending her, that not one of all our arguments ever produced the smallest dissension between us.

Her

Her society was extremely dear to me, for I wished to confide to a person who could understand me, the sentiments which I felt, and which seemed to be heightened by participation. About three years older than myself, and a little less bashful, she had a sort of external advantage which I did not envy her. She prattled prettily and fluently, while I knew only how to answer. True it is, that people took a particular pleasure in questioning me; but that was a task every one was not equal to. To my dear friend alone was I truly communicative; others had only, as it were, a glimpse of me, unless, indeed, it were a person sufficiently skilful to lift up the veil, which, without intending to hide, I naturally threw over myself.

Henrietta was sometimes, but not often, of our party. She had formed a more *congenial* connection with a Mademoiselle de Cornillon, a girl of eighteen years of age, who was as ugly as sin, and as full of wit and mischief as the devil; a proper hobgoblin, in short, to frighten children, but who would not have chosen to enter the lists either against Sophia's sober reason or mine.

I cannot pass over in silence the tender marks of affection that were shewn me from my first arrival by an excellent girl, whose unalterable attachment has afforded me consolation on more occasions than one. Angelica Boufflers, born to no inheritance, had taken the veil at the age of seventeen. She was still ignorant of her own disposition. Nature

had formed her of the most combustible materials, and the compression suffered by her energies had exalted the sensibility of her heart, and the vivacity of her mind, to the highest possible degree. The want of fortune had assigned her a place among the lay sisters, with whom she had nothing in common but the servility of their functions. There are minds which stand in no need of cultivation. St. Agatha (for that was the name she had assumed upon taking the veil), without having much education to boast of, was superior not only to her companions in servitude, but to most of the ladies\* of the choir. Her worth was known; and though, according to the usage of those societies, where the majority are always ungrateful, excessive labour was imposed upon her active disposition, she enjoyed, nevertheless, the respect that was her due. She was appointed, at that time, to wait upon the boarders; and though she had nobody to assist her, and was entrusted with the care of many things beside, she found means to get through her business with equal cheerfulness and dispatch. She had scarcely attracted my notice, when I had already obtained a distinguished share of hers: her kindness prevented my wishes, and made me remark her. At table she studied my taste unknown to me, and endeavoured to gratify it; in my chamber, she seemed to take a

\* In many of the convents, that were not of the mendicant orders, the nuns were all of noble birth,—*Transf.*

pleasure in making my bed, and never let an opportunity escape of saying a civil thing. If I met her, she embraced me with tenderness; and sometimes would take me to her cell, where she had a beautiful canary-bird, which she had tamed, and taught to speak. She even gave me secretly a key to her apartment, that I might have access to it in her absence; and there I read the books that composed her little library—the poems of Father du Cerceau, and mystical works in abundance. When her avocations prevented her from spending a few minutes with me, or were likely to prevent her, I was sure to find a tender billet, which I never failed to answer; and these answers she treasured up like so many jewels, and shewed me them afterwards carefully locked up in her de . The attachment of sister Agatha to little Mademoiselle Phlipon soon became the talk of the whole convent; but any one would have supposed that it was natural it should be so; for my fellow-boarders never appeared hurt at the preference. When any of the nuns spoke of her partiality, she would ask, with her natural frankness, whether, in her place, they would not do the same? and when some peevish sister of fourscore, mother Gertrude for instance, told her, that she loved me too well, she replied, that she only thought so because incapable of feeling the like affection; ‘and you yourself,’ added she, ‘do you not stop her whenever she comes in your way?’ Mo-



ther Gertrude used to turn away, muttering something between her teeth ; but if she met me only half an hour afterwards, she was sure to put some sweetmeats in my hand. When the Miss Cannets arrived, and I attached myself to Sophy, Agatha appeared a little jealous, and the nuns took a pleasure in tormenting her ; but her generous affection did not diminish. It seemed as if she was satisfied with my suffering myself to be loved, and that she enjoyed the pleasure I derived from an intimacy with a person whose age was nearer to my own, and whose society I could command every hour of the day. Agatha was at that time four-and-twenty. Her sweet disposition and her affection have inspired me with the sincerest regard for her, which I have ever taken a pride in testifying. During the last years that convents existed, she was the only one that I visited in hers. Now turned out of it, when her age and infirmities rendered such an asylum necessary, and forced to live upon the scanty pension allotted her, she vegetates at no great distance from the place of our ancient abode, or from that in which I am confined ; and in the midst of the evils attendant on penury, only laments the captivity of her daughter ; for thus has she always called me. O my kind friends, you will sometimes cease to pity me, when you consider the blessings which heaven has left me still. In the midst of their power, my persecutors have not the advantage  
of



of being beloved by an Agatha, to whom misfortune only renders the objects of her attachment more dear.

The winter had passed away. During that season, I had seen my mother less frequently; but my father would never let a Sunday pass without visiting me, and taking me to walk in the *Jardin du Roi*, if the weather were any way tolerable; and there we used to brave the severity of the cold, and trip it gaily over the snow. Delightful walks! the remembrance of which was revived, twenty years after, upon reading those lines of Thomson, which I never repeat without emotion:

Pleas'd was I, in my cheerful morn of life,  
When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd,  
And sung of nature with unceasing joy;  
Pleas'd was I, wand'ring through your rough domain,  
Through the pure virgin snows, myself as pure.

It had been resolved upon at my entrance into the convent, that I should remain there only a year. This I had desired myself, as I wished to see bounds set to the sacrifice I was about to make by separating myself from my mother. The nuns, on their part, when they consented to my receiving my first communion in the fourth month of my residence among them, had taken great care to stipulate that I should not leave them the sooner on that account, and that I should complete the period agreed upon. The year having revolved, I had left the convent. My mother informed me that my grandmother Phlippon,

pon, who was extremely fond of me, wished me much to remain with her some time, and that my mother had consented to my going, conceiving it could not be disagreeable to me, as she should be able to see me there more frequently than at the convent: that arrangement, beside, was perfectly suitable to circumstances. My father had been chosen into some office of his parish, and on that account was forced to be frequently from home. I readily understood that my mother, being obliged at present to direct her attention to the work entrusted to the young men, about whom she had hitherto given herself no concern, had lost a portion of her liberty, which she would have wished to preserve entire, in order to bestow her whole time upon me.

The situation she proposed to me was indeed a gentle transition from the absence I had lately experienced to a complete return to her, and I accepted it the more readily, as I had a great liking for my grandmother. She was a graceful, good-humoured little woman, whose agreeable manners, polished language, gracious smile, and significant looks, still announced some pretensions to please, or at least to remind us that she had once been a pleasing object. She was sixty-five or sixty-six years of age, and still paid attention to her dress, taking care, however, to suit it to her years; for she prided herself above all things on the study and observance of decorum. Considerable corpulence, a light  
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step, an upright carriage, handsome little hands, of which the fingers were gracefully displayed, and a sentimental style of conversation, intermingled with fallies of dignified mirth, took away from her every appearance of age. She was a delightful companion for young women, whose society pleased her, and of whose attentions she was proud. Becoming a widow immediately upon the termination of the first year of her marriage, my father, born after the death of her husband, was her only child. Misfortunes in trade having reduced her to distress, she had been obliged to have recourse to some distant relations, who were living in opulence, and who employed her, in preference to any body else, in the education of their children. Thus, for instance, at Madame Boismorel's she brought up both her son Roberge, of whom I shall speak in the sequel, and her daughter, afterwards Madame de Favieres. A little estate, which devolved to her by inheritance, having rendered her independent, she retired to the island of St. Louis, where she occupied a decent apartment with her sister, Mademoiselle Rotiffet, whom she called Angelica. This worthy maiden, asthmatic and devout, as virtuous as an angel, and as simple as a child, was entirely devoted to her elder sister. The affairs of the little household devolved entirely on her. A charwoman, who attended twice a day, performed the more menial offices; but every thing else was done by Angelica, who dressed her sister with the most reverend care. She naturally became my gover-

nante,

nante, at the same time that Madame Phlipon undertook to be my teacher. Behold me, then, in their hands, after having quitted the house of God, regretted, beloved, and embraced by the whole sisterhood of nuns, wept over by my Agatha and my Sophia, lamenting my separation from them, and promising to mitigate its pains by the frequency of my visits.

This engagement was too dear to my heart not to be scrupulously fulfilled. My walks were frequently directed towards the Congregation, my aunt Angelica and my father taking a pleasure in accompanying me thither. The news of my arrival in the parlour used to run like lightning through the convent; and in the course of an hour I had interviews with twenty different persons. But those visits, after all, were poor substitutes for the daily and confidential intercourse of friendship. They became less frequent, and I filled up the intervals with an epistolary correspondence, in which my Sophy bore the greatest part. That was the origin of my fondness for composition, and one of the causes that, by giving me a greater habit of writing, gave me also a greater facility.

# PRIVATE MEMOIRS.

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## SECTION II.

August 28.

**I** FEEL the resolution of continuing my undertaking grow weaker. The miseries of my country torment me; the loss of my friends affects my spirits; an involuntary sadness benumbs my senses, overclouds my imagination, and weighs heavy on my heart. France is become a vast amphitheatre of carnage, a bloody arena, on which her own children are tearing one another to pieces.

The enemy, favoured by her intestine dissensions, advances in every quarter; the cities of the North fall into their hands; Flanders and Alsace are about to become their prey; the Spaniard is ravaging Roussillon; the Savoyards reject an alliance, which anarchy renders hateful; they return to their old master, whose troops invade our frontiers; the rebels of la Vendée continue to lay waste a large extent of territory; the Lyonnese, indiscreetly provoked, burst into open resistance; Marseilles pre-  
pares



pare for their succour ; the neighbouring departments take arms : and in this universal agitation, and in the midst of these multiplied disorders, there is nothing uniform but the measures of the foreign powers, whose conspiracy against freedom and mankind our excesses have sanctified. Our government is a species of monster, of which the form and the actions are equally odious ; it destroys whatever it touches, and devours its very self : this last effort of its rage is the only consolation of its numerous victims.

The armies, ill conducted, and worse provided, fight and fly alternately with desperate energy. The most able commanders are accused of treason, because certain representatives, utterly ignorant of war, blame what they do not comprehend, and stigmatize as aristocrats all those who are more enlightened than themselves. A legislative body, characterized by debility from the moment of its existence, presented us at first with animated debates, which lasted as long as there existed among the members sufficient wisdom to foresee dangers, and courage enough to announce them. The just and generous spirits, who had nothing in view but the welfare of their country, and dared attempt to establish it, after being impudently represented under the most odious colours, and in forms the most contradictory, were at last sacrificed by ignorance and fear to intrigue and speculation ; chased from that body of which they were the soul,

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they left behind them an extravagant and corrupt minority, who exercise despotic sway, and who, by their follies and their crimes, are digging their own graves: but it is, alas! in consummating the ruin of the republic! The nation, spiritless and ill-informed—because the love of selfish enjoyments makes men indolent, and indolence makes them blind—has accepted a constitution essentially vicious, which, even if unexceptionable, should have been rejected with indignation, because nothing can be accepted from the hands of villainy without degradation to the receiver. They still talk of security and freedom, though they see them both violated with impunity in the persons of their representatives! They can only change their tyrants; they are already under a rod of iron, and every change appears to them a blessing; but incapable of effecting it themselves, they expect it from the first master who shall chuse to assume the sovereign command. O Brutus! thou, whose daring hand emancipated the depraved Romans, we have erred in vain, like thee! Those just and enlightened men, whose ardent spirits longed for liberty, and who had prepared themselves for it by the tranquil studies, and in the silent retreats of philosophy, flattered themselves, like thee, that the subversion of despotism would establish the throne of justice and peace. Alas! it has only served as the signal for the most hateful passions, and the most execrable vice! After the proscriptions

tions of the triumvirs, thou saidst, thou wert more ashamed of that which had caused Cicero's death, than sorry for the melancholy event; thou blamedst thy friends at Rome for *having become slaves rather by their own fault than that of their tyrants*, and for being *daftards* enough to see and suffer things, the bare recital of which was insupportable, and ought to have filled them with horror. In like manner do I feel indignant in the depth of my dungeon. But the hour of indignation is past; it is too evident that we have no longer a right to hope for any thing good, or to be astonished at any species of evil. Will history ever paint these dreadful times, or the abominable monsters who fill them with their barbarities? They surpass the cruelties of Marius, and the sanguinary achievements of Sylla. The latter, when he shut up and slaughtered six thousand men, who had surrendered to him, in the neighbourhood of the senate, which he encouraged to proceed in the debate amid their dreadful cries, acted like a tyrant, abusing the power he had usurped: but to what can we compare the domination of those hypocrites, who, always wearing the mask of justice, and speaking the language of the law, have created a tribunal to serve as the engine of their personal vengeance, and send to the scaffold, with formalities insultingly judicial, every individual, whose virtues offend them, whose talents excite their jealousy, or whose opulence calls forth their lust of wealth? What Babylon  
ever

ever presented a prototype of Paris, polluted with debauchery and blood, and governed by magistrates whose profession it is to circulate falsehoods, to sell calumny, and to panegyryze assassination? What people ever depraved their morals and their nature to such a degree, as to contract an appetite for blood, to foam with fury when an execution is delayed, and to be ever ready to exercise their ferocity on all who attempt to calm or mitigate their rage? The days of September were the sole work of a small number of inebriated tygers; on the 31st of May and the 2d of June the triumph of guilt was confirmed by the apathy of the Parisians, and their tame acquiescence in slavery. Since that epoch the progression has been sudden and dreadful; the faction of the Convention called the *Mountain*, offers nothing to the eye but a band of robbers, clothed and swearing like watermen, preaching massacre, and setting the example of rapine. Crowds of people surround the courts of justice, and vociferate their threats against the judges, who are thought too tardy in the condemnation of innocence. The prisons are gorged with public functionaries, with generals, and private individuals, of characters that graced and ennobled humanity: a zeal to accuse is received as a proof of civism, and the search and detention of persons of merit and property comprehend all the duties of an ignorant and unprincipled magistracy.

The victims of Orleans are fallen. *Charlotte Corday* has not produced the smallest movement in a city which did not deserve to be delivered from a monster. *Brissot*\*, *Genfonné*, and a multitude of other members, still remain under impeachment; proofs are wanting, but the fury of their enemies knows no bounds; and for want of reasons to condemn them, an appeal is made to the perverted will of the sovereign people, who impatiently expect their heads as a wild beast awaits his prey. *Custine*† is no more; *Robespierre* triumphs; *Hebert* marks the victims; *Chabot* counts them; the tribunal is in haste to condemn, while the populace is preparing to accelerate and generalize the work

\* Some women who belong to a club that meets in the church of St Eustatius, said one day, setting up a howl, that they must have the head of Brissot, without permitting the judges to proceed upon his trial with the same tedious formalities they had observed upon that of Custine. Two thousand persons surrounded the court the day that judgment was pronounced on that general, trembled for fear he should escape, and declared aloud, that if he were white-washed, he must be treated like Montmorin, and with him, all the villains in the prisons.

† His property is confiscated. His daughter-in-law, a young and charming woman, at that time pregnant, who divided her days between her father-in-law, dragged to the tribunal, and her husband confined at the *Force*, was imprisoned immediately after the execution of the former. She miscarried;—but what does that signify to these monsters? The public accuser had received of her 200,000 livres to save innocence: he returned them; but he had her arrested for fear she should denounce his infamous behaviour.

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of death. In the mean time famine invades the land; pernicious laws put an end to all industry, stop the circulation of commodities, and annihilate commerce; the public money is squandered; disorganization becomes general; and in this total overthrow of the public fortune, men, devoid of shame, wallow in ill-acquired wealth, set a price upon all their actions, and draw up a bill of rates for the life and death of their fellow-citizens.

*Dillon* and *Castellane* obtain their release: the one from the Magdellonettes, the other from St. Pélagie, by the payment of thirty thousand livres to Chabot. *Sillery* gets his friends to cheapen his liberty, which he is rich enough to purchase, and two hundred bottles of his excellent champaign are the overplus of the bargain, driven with the *strumpets* of the committee\*. Roland's wife, recalled from time to time by the kind care of the Père Duchêne to the recollection of the populace, awaits the last effort of their rage in the same prison, from which a kept girl departs in peace, after paying for her deliverance, and for the impunity

\* The money and wine were given and received; *Sillery* obtained only the liberty of seeing and discoursing with whom he pleased. With this mitigation of his imprisonment he is still confined in the Luxembourg. Three or four abandoned women, belonging to the infamous wretches of the committees of public and general safety, form a trading company, in which the pecuniary means of salvation of every remarkable individual are assessed.

of her accomplice, a fabricator of forged assignats. Henriot, the commandant of the national guards, first a lackey, then a custom-house officer, and afterwards a ringleader at the massacre at St. Firmin, breaks seals, empties cellars, and removes furniture, without feeling the smallest compunction: charged with the care of the deputies confined in the Luxembourg, he presumes to intrude into their presence purposely to insult them, deprives them by open force of pens, books, and papers, and adds menaces to outrage. The subordination of authorities is a chimera, to which no one is permitted to appeal without incurring the accusation of *incivism*, and being supposed to entertain counter-revolutionary designs. Have the fugitive members at length escaped from this inhospitable land, which devours the virtuous, and drenches itself with their blood? O my friends! may propitious fate debark you safe in the United States, the only asylum of liberty! My best wishes attend you! nor am I without hopes that the winds are now wafting you to that happy land. But *my* doom, alas! is irrevocable! I shall never behold you more; and in your departure, so much desired for your own sakes, I see with sorrow our eternal separation. And you, my much revered husband, grown weak and weary of the world, and sunk into a premature old age, which you preserve by painful efforts from the pursuit of the assassin—shall I ever be permitted to see you again,  
and.

and to pour the balm of consolation into your heart, sorely bruised by the hard hand of misfortune?—How many days longer am I destined to remain a witness of the desolation of my native land, and of the degradation of my countrymen? Affailed by these afflicting images, I find it impracticable to steel my heart against affliction; a few scalding tears start from my heavy eyes; and I suffer the rapid pen to lie idle, that passed so lightly over my youthful days.

I will again attempt to recal them to my mind, and to pursue their course. In future times perhaps my ingenuous recitals will cheer the gloomy moments of some unfortunate captive, and make him forget his own calamities while pitying mine: or perhaps some poet or philosopher, desirous of weaving the passions of the human heart into the progress of a romance, or the action of a drama, will find in my story the materials of his work.

Probably not many days will elapse before the want of provisions, exasperating the impatient populace, will urge them to tumults, which their ringleaders will take care to render destructive. The 10th of August was intended to be a commemoration of the ides of September. The day before yesterday their renewal was threatened without reserve in case Custine should be acquitted. The *Cordeliers* already proclaim the necessity of getting rid of all suspected persons, and punish-

ments are ordained for such as have spoken ill of those glorious days. Is not this providing beforehand the justification of their return? The persons consigned to the revolutionary tribunal are not criminals sent thither to be judged, but victims which it is ordered to immolate. Those who are imprisoned for any thing else than crimes, are not under the protection of the law; but, left at the mercy of suspicion and calumny, it is impossible for them to conceive themselves safe from the fury of a deluded populace. Let us turn from this lamentable era, to which the reign of Tiberius can alone be compared, and call back again the peaceful and delightful days of youth.

I had completed my twelfth year, and the thirteenth was passing away under the care of my grandmother. The quiet of her house, and the piety of my aunt Angelica, accorded admirably with the tender and contemplative disposition I had brought with me from the convent. Every morning Angelica accompanied me to church to hear mass, where I was soon remarked by those monopolizers of consciences, who make a merit with God of peopling the cloisters. The reverend Abbé G  ry, with his wry neck and downcast eye, accosted the person whom he took for my governante, to congratulate her on the edification produced by the example of her pupil, and to testify the strong desire he felt to be her guide in the ways of the Lord. He learned with regret, that the grand ceremonies  
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were already over, and that I had put my conscience into other hands. He then desired to know from my own mouth, whether I had not begun to think of my future destination, and of bidding farewell to the vanities of the world. I answered, that I was too young yet to know my vocation. Monsieur Géry sighed, said several fine things to me, and did not fail to place himself in my way out, in order to bow to me devoutly. The piety of my young heart did not go so far as to be gratified with jesuitical affectations; it was too sincere to join hands with the absurdities of bigotry, and the wry neck of Monsieur Géry was not at all to my taste. I had nevertheless a secret design of devoting myself to the monastic life. St. Francis de Sales, one of the most amiable saints in Paradise, had made a conquest of my heart, and the ladies of the Visitation, of which he was the founder, were already my adoptive sisters. But I was well satisfied, that, being an only child, I should not obtain my parents' consent to take the veil during my minority, and was unwilling to give them unnecessary concern by any premature disclosure of my sentiments. Besides, should my resolution fail during the days of probation, it would only be furnishing the ungodly with arms. I resolved, therefore, to conceal the intention, and to pursue my plan in silence. I laid my grandmother's little library under contribution; and the *Philotée* of St. Francis de Sales,



and the Manual of St. Auguftin, became my favourite fources of meditation. What doctrines of fpiritual love ! what delicious aliment for the innocence of a fervent foul, abandoned to celeftial illufions ! Some controverfial writings of Boffuet furnifhed me with frefh food for my mind : favourable as they were to the caufe which they defended, they fometimes let me into the fecret of objections that might be made to it, and fet me on fcrutinizing my articles of faith. That was my firft ftep ; but it was infinitely remote from the fcepticifm, at which in a courfe of years I was deftined to arrive, after having been fucceffively Janfenift, Cartefian, Stoic, and Deift. What a route, to terminate at laft in patriotifm, which has conducted me to a dungeon ! In the midft of all this, fome old books of travels, and mythology in abundance, amufed my imagination, while the letters of Madam de Sevigné fixed my tafte. Her delightful eafe, her elegance, her vivacity, her tendernes, made me enter into her intimacy. I became acquainted with her fociety ; I was as much familiarized with her manners and the circumftances of her fituation, as if I had paffed my life with her. My grandmother faw little company, and feldom went out ; but her agreeable pleafantry animated the converfation, while I was fitting by her fide, bufied about the different kinds of needle-work which fhe took a pleafure in teaching me. Madam Befnard, the fame great aunt who had paid fo much

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attention to me while I was at nurse, came every afternoon to pass an hour or two with her sister. Her austere disposition was always accompanied by a solemn sort of formality, and an air of ceremony, upon which Madam Phlipon would sometimes rally her, but so tenderly as not to give offence to her sister, who, after all, generally contributed her share to the conversation, by producing some wholesome truth, delivered in a manner somewhat harsh and abrupt, but which was readily forgiven, on account of the well-known goodness of her heart. My grandmother, who set the highest value on the graces, and every thing else that embellishes social life, was extremely sensible of the complaisance which my gentle temper, the desire of pleasing every body about me, and her own amiable manners inspired me with towards her. She would sometimes pay me a compliment; and when, as was generally the case, I replied with readiness and propriety, she could not conceal her exultation, but would cast a triumphant look upon Madam Besnard, who, elevating her shoulders, seized the first moment of my removal to another part of the room, to say, in a low voice, which I heard very distinctly, ‘ You are really insupportable: she will be spoiled; what a pity!’ My grandmother on this assumed a more stately posture than before, assuring her sister, with an air of superiority, that she knew very well what she was about; while the worthy Angelica, with her pale face,

face, her prominent chin, her spectacles on her nose, and her knitting-needle in her hand, would tell them both, there was no danger to be apprehended, nothing that would be said could do me any harm, and that I had quite sense enough to be left to my own guidance. This aunt Bernard, so rigid in her manners, and so fearful of the bad effects of flattery, was very uneasy at my lying on a hard bed ; and if my finger chanced to ache, never failed to call twice a day to inquire concerning it. What sincere inquietude, what anxious cares did she not display on these occasions ? And how delightful was their contrast with her usual severity and reserve ! I verily believe that heaven placed me in the midst of people of kind hearts, on purpose to make mine the most affectionate possible.

My grandmother one day took it into her head to pay a visit to Madam de Boismorel, either for the pleasure of seeing her, or for that of exhibiting her grand-daughter. Great were the preparations in consequence, and tedious my dressing, which began at break of day : at length off we set with my aunt Angelica, for the *Rue St. Louis au Marais*, and reached it about noon. On entering the hotel, all the servants, beginning with the porter, saluted Madam Phlipon with an air of respect and affection, emulous who should treat her with the greatest civility. She answered every body in the kindest but at the same time in the most dignified manner ; and so far all went well. But her grand-daughter

daughter was perceived; for she could not deny herself the pleasure of pointing her out to observation, and the *servants* must needs pay fine compliments to the young lady. I had a sort of uncomfortable feeling, for which I could not account, but which I perceived nevertheless to proceed in part from the idea that servants might look at and admire me, but that it was not their business to pay me compliments. We passed on; were announced by a tall footman, and walked into the parlour, where we found Madam de Boismorel seated upon what was then called not an *ottomane*, but a *canapé*, and embroidering with great gravity. Madam de Boismorel was of the same age, stature, and corpulence as my grandmother; but her dress bespoke less taste than desire to display her opulence and indicate her rank; while her countenance, far from expressing a wish to please, announced her claims to respect, and the consciousness of her merit. A rich lace, puckered into the shape of a little cap, with wings pointed at the ends like the ears of a hare, was placed upon the top of her head, and allowed her hair to be seen, which was probably not of her own growth, and was dressed with that affected discretion which it is very necessary to assume at sixty years of age; while rouge, an inch thick, gave her unmeaning eyes a much more unfeeling look than was necessary, to make me fix mine upon the ground.—

‘ Ah! Mademoiselle Rotisset, good morning to you!



you!’ cried Madam de Boismorel in a loud and frigid tone, while rising to receive us. (Mademoiselle?—So my grandmother is mademoiselle in this house.) ‘ I am very glad to see you indeed. And who is this fine girl?—Your granddaughter I suppose?—She promises to make a pretty woman! Come here, my dear, and sit down by my side. She is a little bashful. How old is your grand-daughter, Mademoiselle Rotiffet? She is a little brown to be sure, but her skin is clear, and will grow fairer a year or two hence—she is quite the woman already! I will lay my life that hand must be a lucky one. ‘ Did you never venture in the lottery?’— ‘ Never, Madam; I am not fond of gaming.’— I dare say not: at your age children are apt to think their game a sure one. What an admirable voice!—so sweet, and yet so full-toned.—But how grave she is! Pray, my dear, are you not a little of the devotee?’— ‘ I know my duty to God, and I endeavour to fulfil it.’— ‘ That is a good girl! You wish to take the veil, don’t you?’— ‘ I know not what may be my destination, nor do I seek as yet to divine it.’— ‘ Very sententious, indeed! Your grand-daughter reads a great deal, does not she, Mademoiselle Rotiffet?’— ‘ Reading, Madam, is her greatest delight; she always devotes to it some part of the day.’— ‘ Ay, ay, I see how it is: but have a care she do not turn author; that would be  
a pity



a pity indeed.' The conversation between the two ladies next turned upon the family and friends of the mistress of the house, my grandmother inquiring very respectfully after the uncle, and the cousin, and the daughter-in-law, and the son-in-law, and the Abbé Langlois, and the Marchioness of Levi, and the Counsellor Brion, and Mr. Parent, the rector: they talked of their health, of their family connexions, and of their follies; as for instance of those of Madam Rondé, who, notwithstanding her great age, still pretended to have a fine bosom, and made a great display of it, except when getting in or out of a carriage, for then she hid it with an ample handkerchief which she always carried in her pocket for that purpose, because, as she said, such a sight ought not to be thrown away upon footmen. During this dialogue, Madam de Boismorel made a few stitches in her work, or else patted her little dog, keeping her eyes almost constantly fixed upon me. I was careful not to encounter looks I did not like; but took a survey of the apartment, the decorations of which appeared far more agreeable to me than the lady to whom they belonged. In the mean time my blood circulated with more than usual rapidity, my cheeks glowed, and my little heart was all in a flutter. I did not as yet ask myself, why my grandmother was not sitting upon the *canapé*, and why Madam de Boismorel was not playing the humble part of *Mademoiselle Rotiffet*; but I had the  
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feeling which naturally leads to that reflection, and saw an end put to the visit with as much joy as if relieved from some grievous suffering. 'Mind, now, don't you forget to buy me a ticket in the lottery, and let your grand-daughter chuse the number, do you hear, Mademoiselle Rotiffet? I am determined to try her hand. Come, give me a kiss: and you, my little dear, don't look so much upon the ground. You have very good eyes; and even your confessor will not blame you for opening them. — Yes, yes, Mademoiselle Rotiffet, many a fine bow will come to your share, take my word for it; and that before you are much older. Good morning to you, ladies.' Thereupon Madam de Boismorel rang her bell, ordered Lafleur to call in a day or two at Mademoiselle Rotiffet's for a lottery ticket, chid her dog for barking, and had already resumed her seat upon the *canapé* before we were well out of the room.

Our walk home was a silent one, and I hastened to return to books that might make me forget Madam de Boismorel, whose compliments were no more to my taste than those of her servants. My grandmother, not very well satisfied herself, mentioned her sometimes, and talked of her peculiarities; of her consummate selfishness, which made her say that children were but secondary considerations, when Madam Philipon took the liberty of reminding her of the interest of her family, in order to check her prodigal expence: she spoke  
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also of that freedom of manners, so common among women of fashion, in consequence of which she received her confessor, and other persons, at her toilet, and changed her linen in their presence. This sort of behaviour struck me as very strange : and my curiosity induced me to set my grandmother talking about all these matters ; but I kept the impressions they made on my mind to myself ; not thinking them exactly such as I could make known to her with propriety.

A fortnight after our visit, we received one from Madam de Boismorel's son, who was not at home when we called upon his mother. He was a man verging upon forty ; his aspect was grave but gentle ; and his behaviour equally decent and dignified. His eyes, which were large, and even a little too full, sent forth frequent flashes of lightning ; and his bold and manly voice, softened by respect, spoke the language of the soul in tones expressive of a gracious kind of politeness that seemed to flow directly from the heart. He addressed himself respectfully to my grandmother, calling her his good old friend, and bowed to me with that sort of reverence which men of susceptible minds take a pride in shewing to young women. Our conversation was at once guarded and familiar : M. de Boismorel took care not to let slip the opportunity of making handsome mention of the obligations he owed to my grandmother's care ; and I easily understood that he was hinting to her  
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in an obscure but delicate manner, that providence had rewarded her generous attention to other people's children, by giving her so promising a grand-child of her own.

I thought M. de Boismorel infinitely more amiable than his mother, and was delighted whenever he called upon us, which was generally once in two or three months. He had married, at an early age, a very charming woman, and had a son by her, whose education occupied a considerable portion of his thoughts. He had undertaken it himself, and was desirous of directing it by philosophical views, in which he was not a little thwarted by the prejudices of his mother, and the enthusiastic devotion of his wife. He was accused of singularity; and as his nerves had been affected in consequence of a dreadful inflammatory disorder, the old countesses, the solemn lawyers, and the spruce abbés of his family, or of his mother's acquaintance, ascribed to a derangement of the brain, resulting from disease, the conduct he pursued in bringing up his boy. These circumstances, when they came to my knowledge, excited much of my attention: it appeared to me that every thing which this singular man said was very much to the purpose, and I began to suspect there were two sorts of reason, if I may say so, one for the closet and another for the world; a morality of principle, and a morality of practice, from the contradiction of which resulted so many absurdities, some of which

which did not altogether escape my observation ; in short, that persons of the gay world called every body insane, who was not affected with the common insanity : and thus did materials for reflection insensibly accumulate in my active brain.

My grandmother sometimes compared the sentiments and behaviour of Mr. de Boismorel with those of his sister, Madam de Favières, of whom she had some reason to complain ; whose brother had found it necessary to remind her that Mademoiselle Rotisset was their own relation (a circumstance, said I to myself, that their mother appears either not to know, or not inclined to acknowledge), and to whom she had no desire to introduce me, any more than I to be introduced—which indeed she was so well aware of, that she never even proposed a second visit to Madam de Boismorel.

My father had vacated his office ; the year to be spent with my grandmother had elapsed ; and I returned to the arms of my indulgent mother. But it was not without regret that I left the handsome streets of the *Isle St. Louis*, the pleasant quays, and the tranquil banks of the Seine, where I was accustomed to take the air with my aunt Angelica, in the serene summer evenings, contemplating the winding course of the river, and the extensive landscape beyond it—quays, along which I used to pass, without meeting in my solitary way with any object to interrupt my meditations, when in the fervency of my zeal I was repairing to the temple



in order to pour out my whole soul at the foot of the altar. My grandmother's gaiety gave charms to her habitation, in which I had spent many pleasant and peaceful days. I took leave of her with a flood of tears; notwithstanding my attachment to my mother, whose merit, of a more solid kind, was accompanied by a reserve, with which I had not till then made any comparison that could make it appear less attractive, as at that moment it struck me in a confused manner. Child of the Seine, it was still upon its banks that I was going to reside; but the situation of my father's house was not quiet and solitary like that of my grandmother. The moving picture of the *Pont-Neuf* varied the scene every moment, and I entered literally as well as figuratively into the world, when I returned under my paternal roof. A free air, however, and an unconfined space, still gave scope to my romantic and wandering imagination. How many times from my window, which fronted the north, have I contemplated, with emotion, the vast expanse of heaven, and its azure dome, designed with so much grandeur, and stretching from the grey east beyond the *Pont-au-Change* to the trees of the mall, and the houses of Chaillot, resplendent with the ruddy beams of the setting sun! Never did I fail to employ a few moments in this way at the close of every fine day, and often have tears of delight stolen down my cheeks in silence, while my heart, dilated by a sentiment not to be described,

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and happy in the idea and consciousness of existence, was offering to the Supreme Being a pure homage of gratitude worthy of his acceptance. I know not if sensibility give a more vivid hue to every object, or if certain situations, which do not appear very remarkable, contribute powerfully to develop it, or if both be not reciprocally cause and effect : but when I review the events of my life, I find it difficult to assign to circumstances, or to my disposition, that variety and that plenitude of affection which have marked so strongly every point of its duration, and left me so clear a remembrance of every place at which I have been.

Cajou had still continued to teach me music. He was fond of making me talk over the theory, or rather the mechanism of his art ; for, though something of a composer, he understood little of mathematics, and of metaphysics less : but he was ambitious of communicating to me all he knew. He was almost as much afflicted at my want of expression in singing, as astonished at the ease with which I pursued a chain of reasoning. ‘ Put soul into it ! ’ he would continually exclaim : ‘ You sing an air as nuns chant an anthem.’ The poor man did not perceive that I had too much soul to be able to put it in a song : and indeed I was as much embarrassed to give the proper expression to a tender passage of music, as I should formerly have been in reading aloud the episode of Eucharis or Erminia. Being suddenly transformed into the personage supposed to be

speaking, I was no longer capable of imitation ; I experienced the sentiment to be described ; my breathing grew short ; my voice faltered ; and difficulties resulted thence, which I could not overcome in a flat and serious style of singing ; for I could not prevail upon myself to act the impassioned lover.

*Mignard*, whose Spanish politeness gained him the esteem of my grandmother, had begun, while I was with her, to teach me the guitar, and continued to give me lessons when I returned to my father's. The common accompaniments did not cost me many months to execute ; and *Mignard* afterwards took a pleasure in forwarding my improvement, till in the end I surpassed my master. *Mozon* was recalled to perfect my dancing, as was *Mr. Demure*, to keep up my arithmetic, geography, writing, and history. My father made me resume the graver, confining me to the most trifling branch of the art, to which he thought to attach me by the tie of interest ; for having taught me enough to make me of some use, he gave me little jobs to do, of which he shared the profit with me at the end of the week, according to a book which he desired me to keep. But I soon became weary of this ; nothing was so insipid to me, as to engrave the edge of a watch-case, or to ornament a bauble : I liked much better to read a good author, than to buy a riband. I did not conceal my disgust ; and as no constraint was laid upon me, I threw aside the graver, and have never touched it since. I went out every morn-

morning with my mother to hear mass : after which we sometimes made our little purchases. When the time required for these purposes, and the hours devoted to the lessons of my different masters, were over, I retired to my closet to read, to write, and to meditate. The long evenings made me return to my needle-works, during which my mother had the complaisance to read to me for hours together. These readings gave me great pleasure ; but as they did not permit me to digest things to my entire satisfaction, I conceived the idea of making extracts. Accordingly, my first employment in the morning was to consign to paper what had struck me most forcibly the preceding evening ; and this done, I returned to the book to recover the connexion, or to copy a passage, that I was desirous of having entire. This grew into a habit, a passion, a perfect rage. My father having only the little library, which I had formerly exhausted, I borrowed and hired books, and could not bear the idea of returning them till I had made what I conceived the best part of their contents my own. In this manner I demolished *Pluche*, *Rollin*, *Crevier*, the *Père d'Orleans*, *St. Real*, the *Abbé de Vertot*, and *Mezeray*, who so little resembles the latter ; *Mezeray*, the driest of all possible writers, but the historian of my country, with the annals of which I wished to be acquainted.

My grandmother Bimont was dead. My little uncle settled at St. Bartholomew's, in a better place

than that of master of the choir, boarded with the first vicar, the Abbé le Jay, who kept a very tolerable house, where we used to go and pass the evening on Sundays and holidays, after divine service.

The Abbé le Jay was a good old man, clumsy both in body and mind, a wretched preacher, an unmerciful confessor, a casuist, and the Lord knows what beside. But he was by no means blind to his own interest : he had found means to help on his two brothers, and to get them established as notaries at Paris, where they made a figure in their profession, at that time both reputable and lucrative. His own house was kept by one of his relations, a Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, tall, dry, and fallow, with a shrill voice, proud of her descent, and tiring every body with her economical arrangements, and her pedigree. She was a woman however, and that always enlivens the house of a priest : besides, she contrived to keep a neat and plentiful table for her cousin, who was a great *amateur* of good eating. The Abbé found it extremely agreeable to have a boarder in his house of the amiable disposition of my uncle Bimont : his table was more cheerful, Mademoiselle d'Hannaches better tempered, and his party of tric-trac\* never failed : my mother and the cousin were partners ; and as to me, who seemed thus to be deserted, I was not at all displeased.

\* A game resembling backgammon, but sometimes played by four persons.—*Transf.*



ed at my four friends amusing themselves in that way ; for the Abbé le Jay received company in a large library, which I laid under contribution without mercy. That was a source which I resorted to as long as he lived ; something less than three years. One of his brothers having ruined himself, the Abbé lost his senses, languished for six weeks, threw himself out of a window, and died of his fall. Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, then at law for the inheritance of her uncle, *the captain*, was accommodated in my mother's house, and resided with us a year and a half. During that period I was her secretary : I wrote her letters, copied her dear genealogy, drew up petitions which she presented to the president and attorney-general of the parliament of Paris, who were left trustees of the annuities bequeathed by a Mr. de St. Vallier to poor gentlewomen ; and sometimes accompanied her when she went to make interest with various persons of consequence. I easily perceived that, notwithstanding her ignorance, her stiff demeanour, her bad way of expressing herself, her old-fashioned dress, and her other absurdities, respect was paid to her origin. The names of her ancestors, which she never failed to repeat, were attended to, and great pains were taken to obtain for her what she desired. I compared the honourable reception she met with, with that given me by Madam de Boismorel, which had left a deep impression on my mind ; I could not help feeling my superiority over

Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, who with her genealogy, and at the age of forty, was unable to write a line of common sense, or a legible hand; and it appeared to me that the world was extremely unjust, and the institutions of society highly absurd.

But let us see for a moment what was become of my friends at the convent. My Agatha now and then wrote me letters in the style of tenderness peculiar to those plaintive doves, who dared not indulge in any thing farther than friendship; a style rendered still more affectionate by her ardent soul. Little boxes, pincushions, and sweetmeats, accompanied them, whenever such presents were within her reach. I went occasionally to see her; and was even admitted into the interior of the convent at a festival given in honour of the superior; a privilege they had taken care to insure me, by obtaining unknown to me a licence from the archbishop, which was afterwards presented to me as a special favour, and received by me as such. Every thing was in motion, the young ladies were well dressed, the hall was adorned with flowers, and the refectory stuffed full of dainty cates. It must be confessed, that in these entertainments of poor secluded virgins, in which no doubt something childish may be found, there is also something amiable, ingenious, and graceful, which belongs only to the gentleness of women, to their lively imagination, and innocent playfulness, when they make merry among themselves at a distance from a sex, that always

ways renders them more serious, when it does not completely turn their brain. A short drama, rather dull, but enlivened by the voices of little girls singing a few stanzas in chorus, was the first rallying point : sportive dances succeeded ; at one time some excellent joke, and at another an arch laugh, the more humorous, because making a greater contrast with their habitual gravity, gave a true Saturnalian character to the sports of the good sisters and their pupils.

The physician coming by chance to the infirmary to visit his patients, it was impossible to do otherwise than invite him to a sight of the entertainment. He was accordingly conducted under a cloister hung with festoons of flowers, where a sort of fair was established. There young novices were selling ballads, others were distributing cakes, one was drawing a lottery, and another telling fortunes, while the little girls were loaded with baskets of fruit, and a concert was performing on the opposite side. At the sight of the doctor's wig, the novices pulled their veils over their faces ; the elder boarders looked at their dresses, to see whether it was in disorder ; the younger girls assumed a graver air ; and I held my guitar in a less negligent manner. It was suspended before me by a riband passed over my shoulder. The nuns had insisted upon hearing me sing, and the occasion had inspired me with two stanzas indifferent in themselves, but so well timed as to be received with unbounded

bounded applause. Even Cajou would have been satisfied with the manner in which I sung them; for having no sentiments to express but such as I could indulge, my accents were perfectly unrestrained. I was desired to repeat them before the physician: but that was a very different affair; my voice faltered, and my expression became obscure. An old nun remarked it, and said with an arch look, that it only made my countenance so much the more interesting. At length the doctor withdrew, every body being glad he was gone, though nobody would have wished him not to have been there.

*Sophia* had returned to her family at Amiens; but previously to her departure we had prevailed upon our mothers to see one another. They had in a manner consecrated our connexion, had reciprocally applauded their daughters' choice, and smiled at our promises, of never forgetting each other, which we called upon them to witness. Those promises, however, were better kept than they imagined, notwithstanding certain modifications of which my readers hereafter will be able to judge. My correspondence with my friend was regularly carried on. I wrote to her always once a week, and generally twice.—‘And what,’ methinks I hear it asked, ‘could you have to relate?’—Every thing I saw, thought, felt, or perceived: surely then I could not be in want of something to say! Our correspondence gave facility to itself, and furnished its  
own



own materials. By communicating my reflections, I learned the better to reflect ; I studied with more ardour, because I took a pleasure in sharing what I acquired ; and I made my observations with the greater care, because I found entertainment in committing them to paper. Sophia's letters were less frequent : a numerous family, a crowded house, the forms of society, and the very nature of a provincial life, occupied by trifles, by unmeaning visits, and of which a part is necessarily devoted to cards, left her neither the leisure to write, nor the means of collecting such abundant materials. For that reason perhaps she set the greater value on the letters she received from me, and pressed me more earnestly to write.

The death of the Abbé le Jay having deprived me of the use of his library, in which I had found historians, mythologists, fathers of the church, and literati :—*Cotrou* and *Rouillé*, for instance, who call Horatius Cocles a *one-eyed worthy* ; *Maimbourg*, of a taste equally elevated ; *Berruyere*, who wrote the history of the people of God in the style wherein *Bitaubé* has composed his poem called *Joseph* ; the chevalier *de Folard*, of a very different cast, whose military details appeared to me much more rational than the reflections of the Jesuits ; the Abbé *Banier*, who amused me a great deal more than the Abbé *Fleury* ; *Condillac*, and father *André*, whose metaphysics, applied to eloquence, and to the *beautiful* of every kind, gave me singular delight ;



light; some poems by *Voltaire*; the moral essays of *Nicole*; the *Lives of the Fathers in the Wilderiness*, and that of *Descartes* by *André Baillet*; *Bossuet's* Universal History; the letters of *St. Jérôme*, and the romance of *Don Quixote*, with a thousand others equally congruous:—this library failing me, I was forced to have recourse to the booksellers. My father being ill qualified to select, asked for whatever I pointed out, my choice generally falling on the works of which I had been enabled to form some idea by the quotations and extracts I had found in those I had already read. In that way translations of *Diodorus Siculus*, and other ancient historians, attracted my notice. I was also desirous of reading the history of my own country in some other writer besides *Mezeray*, and accordingly pitched upon the *Abbé Velly*, and his continuators far less interesting than himself, in periods, where, with his talents, they might have been more so. *Pascal*, *Montesquieu*, *Locke*, *Burlamaqui*, and the principal French dramatists, next engaged my attention. I had no plan, nor any end in view, but to improve myself and acquire knowledge. I felt a sort of necessity of exercising the activity of my mind, and of gratifying my serious propensities. I panted after happiness, and could find it only in a powerful exertion of my faculties. I know not what I might have become, if placed in the hands of a skilful preceptor: it is probable that by applying solely or principally to a particular study, I might

might have extended some branch of science, or have acquired talents of a superior kind. But should I have been better or more useful? That is a question which I leave others to resolve: certain it is, that I could not have been more happy. I know of nothing comparable to that plenitude of life, of peace, of satisfaction, to those days of innocence and study. They were not, however, unmixed with trouble, from which the life of man upon earth is never exempt.

I had generally several books on hand at a time, some serving for study, others standing me in the stead of recreation. Historical works of length, as I have already observed, were read aloud in the evening, which was almost the only time I spent with my mother. The whole of the day I passed in the solitude of the closet, in making extracts, or in meditation. As long as the fine weather lasted, we went on holidays to the public walks; and my father regularly carried me besides to all the exhibitions either of pictures or other works of art, so frequent at Paris in those days of luxury, and of prosperity, as it was then called. He enjoyed himself much on these occasions, when he had it in his power to make an agreeable display of his superiority by pointing out to my observation what he understood better than I; and was proud of the taste I discovered as of his own work. That was our point of contact: in those cases we were truly in unison. My father never lost an opportunity of shewing himself

self to advantage; and it was evident that he was fond of being seen in public, giving his arm to a well-dressed young woman, whose blooming appearance frequently produced a murmur of admiration grateful to his ears. If any one accosted him, doubtful of the relation in which we stood to each other, he would say, ‘ My daughter,’ with an air of modest triumph, which I was not the last to perceive, and which affected me without making me vain, for I ascribed it entirely to parental affection. If I chanced to speak, he might be seen examining, in those around, the effect of my voice, or of the good sense I might have uttered, and asking them by his looks, if he had not reason to be proud. I was sensible of these things; and they sometimes made me more timid, without producing any awkward feeling: it seemed incumbent upon me to make amends by my modesty for my father’s pride. In the mean time, how did these worldly amusements, these arts, the images they call up, and the desire to please, so natural and so strong in woman-kind, agree with my devotion, my studies, my sober reason, and my faith? That was precisely the origin of the trouble of which I have been speaking, and of which the progress and effects are well worthy of an explanation rather difficult to give.

With the bulk of mankind, formed rather to feel than to think, the passions give the first shock to their creed, when that creed has been imbibed from

from education. What but passion produces such contradictions between the principles that have been adopted, the desires that those principles cannot extinguish, and the institutions of a government ill calculated to reconcile them? But in a young mind accustomed to reflect, and placed out of the reach of the seductions of the world, it is reason which first gives the alarm, and urges us to examine, before we have any interest to doubt. If my inquietude, however, had no selfish considerations in view, it was not, on that account, independent of my sensibility: I thought through the medium of my heart; while my reason, though observing a strict impartiality, was by no means unconcerned in the operations of the mind.

The first thing that shocked me in that religion, which I professed with the seriousness of a solid and consistent mind, was the universal damnation of all those by whom it is denied, or to whom it has remained unknown. When, instructed by history, I had well considered the extent of the earth, the succession of ages, the progress of empires, the virtues and the errors of so many nations, I perceived weakness, absurdity, and impiety, in the idea of a creator, who devotes to eternal torments those innumerable beings, the frail works of his hands, cast on the earth in the midst of so many perils, and lost in a night of ignorance, from which they have already had so much to suffer. ‘ I am deceived in  
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this article of my creed, it is evident ; am I not equally wrong in some other ? Let me examine.'—From the moment a Catholic has arrived at this stage of reasoning, he is lost for ever to the church. I easily conceive why priests require a blind submission, and preach up so strenuously that religious faith, which adopts without examination, and adores without murmuring ; this is the basis of their empire, which is destroyed as soon as we begin to investigate. Next to the cruelty of damnation, the absurdity of infallibility struck me the most ; and very soon it was rejected likewise. ‘ What truth is there then remaining ? ’—That became the object of a research continued, during a number of years, with an activity, and sometimes an anxiety, of mind, difficult to describe. Critical, moral, philosophical, and metaphysical writers became my favourite study. I was on the hunt after whatever could point them out to me ; and their analysis and comparison became my principal employ. I had lost my confessor, the monk of St. Victor’s : the good M. Lallement was dead, to whose worth and discretion I am happy to have an opportunity of bearing witness. Being under the necessity of making choice of some person to succeed him, I cast my eyes upon the Abbé Morel, who belonged to our parish, and whom I had seen at my uncle’s : he was a little man, by no means wanting in understanding, and professing the greatest austerity of principles, which was the motive  
that



that determined me in my choice. When my faith wavered, he was sure to be the first informed of it ; for I never could tell any thing but the truth. He was eager to put into my hands the apologists and champions of Christianity. Behold me then clothed with the Abbé *Gauchat*, the Abbé *Bergier*, *Abbadie*, *Holland*, *Clarke*, and the rest of the reverend phalanx.—I perused them with critical severity, and sometimes made notes, which I left in the book when I returned it to the Abbé *Morel*, who asked with astonishment if I had written and conceived them. The most whimsical part of the story is, that it was from these works that I first got an idea of those which they pretended to refute, and noted down their titles in order to procure them. In this way did the treatise on *Toleration*, the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, *Questions concerning the Encyclopedie*, the *Bon Sens* of the Marquis d'Argens, the *Jewish Letters*, the *Turkish Spy*, *les Mœurs*, *l'Esprit*, *Diderot*, *d'Alembert*, *Raynal*, and the *Système de la Nature*, pass successively through my hands.

The progress of my mind was not going on alone. Nature was making hers in every way. Although my mother had never precisely told me what I had to expect, she had occasionally said enough on the subject in my presence, and my grandmother in particular had amused herself too much by certain predictions, to leave any room for astonishment at the event.

I remarked it with a sort of joy, as an initiation into the class of grown persons, and I announced it to my mother, who embraced me tenderly, delighted at the idea of my having passed so happily through a period, during which she had been alarmed for my health. Previously to this occurrence I had been sometimes roused in a surprising manner from the most profound sleep. My imagination had no concern in the business: it was too much occupied with serious subjects, and my timorous conscience guarded it too scrupulously against amusing itself with others, for it to be possible that it should present to me what I had never allowed myself to try to comprehend. But an extraordinary ebullition irritated my senses during the hours of repose, and operated of itself, by the mere force of an excellent constitution, an effect which was as perfectly unknown to me as the cause. The first sentiment that resulted from it was an unaccountable sort of terror. I had read in my *Philotée*, that we are not permitted to derive any pleasure from our bodies unless in lawful marriage. This precept recurred to my mind. What I had experienced might be called a pleasure: I was therefore culpable, and in a way too that might occasion me the greatest shame and sorrow, since it was precisely the offence most displeasing to the Lamb without spot. Great was the agitation in my poor heart, fervent were my prayers, and my mortifications

tions severe ! How was a similar event to be avoided in future ? for after all I had not foreseen it. True ; but I had not taken pains to prevent it, at the instant it was coming on. My vigilance accordingly became extreme. I perceived that one position exposed me more to it than another ; and carefully avoided it. My uneasiness was so great, that it used afterwards to wake me before the catastrophe. When I had been unable to prevent it, I leaped out of bed, and standing in the midst of winter, with my naked feet on the bare pavement\*, I supplicated the Lord, with folded arms, to preserve me from the temptations of the devil. I lost no time in putting myself upon low diet ; and it has happened to me to practise literally what the royal prophet has perhaps only given us, as an oriental figure of speech ; I mixed ashes with my bread, and moistened it with my tears. I have made more than one breakfast on toast sprinkled with ashes instead of salt, by way of penance. These repasts did me no more harm than the nocturnal accidents, for the reparation of which, I put myself upon so strange a regimen. At last I conceived that they might be trials which heaven permitted in order to keep us in humble distrust of ourselves ; and I called to mind the complaints of St. Paul, and his prayers to be delivered from *‘ the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan*

\* In France the bed-rooms are generally paved with hexagonal tiles.—*Transf.*

*that was given to buffet him.* I fancied that it was on this account, that St. Bernard used to throw himself in the snow; that St. Jerome covered his body with sackcloth; and that abstinence was so strenuously recommended to those who aspire to perfection. How humble and fervent was my devotion whenever such an accident had happened to me! How much must my earnest voice, my humble attitude, the extraordinary glow of my complexion, and my bright and humid eyes, have added to the expression of a countenance full of candour and sensibility! What a mixture of innocence, of premature sentiment, of good sense, and of simplicity! In truth, I almost consider myself as fortunate in being sent to prison, in order to call to mind these interesting peculiarities, which never before came into my head, and by which I am highly affected.

I already see the curious at a loss to know what I could say on this subject to my confessor: but most assuredly the difficulty they may find in conceiving it, is not greater than the embarrassment I underwent. It was in vain that the most scrupulous examination quieted my conscience as to my will: I always returned to the principle of the *Philotée*, and the argument thence to be inferred; and, in short, if it were only a trial, it ought still to be laid before my confessor. How shall I attempt it? What name shall I give it? What shall I describe? or how express myself?—‘Father, I accuse



cuse myself.'—' Well, child !' What could I say next ? My heart began to beat, the blood rushed into my face, and a dewy moisture diffused itself over my whole frame. ' I accuse myself—of having had emotions contrary to the chastity of a christian.' Oh ! what an excellent phrase ! Santeuil was not more delighted at finding his rhyme, nor Archimedes with the solution of his problem, than I was pleased with the expression. But if he should question me further ? Nay, but I have told all I can ; it is his business to know the rest. I trembled that day much more than usual in kneeling before the holy tribunal ; and my veil was pulled down to my chin. I was anxious, however, to ease my heart of the heaviest of my accusations. ' Have you at all contributed thereto ?'—' I do not know, but my will was not concerned.'—' Have you read no bad books ?'—' Never.'—' Entertained no improper thoughts ?'—' Oh no ! I abhor them.'—' Hem ! go on.' I know not whether the Abbé Morel had any bad thoughts to combat at that moment, but his prudent reserve not suffering him to add any thing more, I looked upon his *Hem ! Go on*, as tantamount to the order of the day, and concluded, that I was not so criminal as I had supposed. He took care, however, in his final exhortation, to recommend to me to be watchful, and to remind me, that angelic purity was the virtue most agreeable in the eyes of the Lord, with other common-place maxims which I



read every day. I was confirmed in my idea that it was a trial, and that I was right in my applications of St. Paul and other holy writers. My conscience was delivered from a very painful scruple, and I became in future free from agitation. It is inconceivable what good effects this habit of restraint has produced on the whole course of my life, notwithstanding the way in which it was contracted. It has gained such an ascendance over me, that I have maintained, from delicacy and a sense of rectitude, the severity that first sprung from devotion. I became mistress of my imagination by dint of curbing it; I took a sort of dislike to every brutal and solitary gratification; and in dangerous situations have found a pleasure in remaining prudent, when seduction would have led me to forget my reason and my principles. Pleasure, like happiness, I can see only in the union of what charms the heart as well as the senses, and leaves behind it no regret. With such sentiments, it is difficult to forget, and impossible to degrade, one's self, at the same time that they do not exempt us from what is properly called a tender passion; on the contrary, they perhaps increase the quantity of fuel by which it is fed. I might add here, as in geometry, Q. E. D. But have a little patience! we have plenty of time to come at the proof.

To the newly acquired sensations of a well organized frame, were insensibly joined all the modifications of the desire to please. I was fond of *look-*  
*ing*

*ing well*, I was pleased at hearing it said, and willingly employed myself in whatever seemed likely to procure me that satisfaction. This, perhaps, is the place to draw my portrait, and it will be quite as well to insert it here as elsewhere. At fourteen years old, having already attained my full height, my stature was, as now, about five feet\*; my leg was well made; my foot well set on; my hips high and prominent; my chest broad, and nobly decorated; my shoulders flat; my carriage firm and graceful; and my walk light and quick:—such was the first *coup d'œil*. My face had nothing striking in it, except a great deal of colour, and much softness and expression. On examining each feature, ‘Where,’ it might be said, ‘is the beauty?’ Not a single one is regular, and yet all please. My mouth is a little wide; you may see prettier every day; but you will see none with a smile more tender or engaging. My eyes, on the contrary, are not very large, and the colour of the iris is hazel; but they are sufficiently prominent, and are crowned with well-arched eye-brows, which, like my hair, are of a dark brown. My look is open, frank, lively, and tender, varying in its expression like the affectionate heart of which it indicates the movements: serious and lofty, it sometimes astonishes; but it charms much more, and never fails to keep attention awake. My nose gave me some uneasiness; I thought it a little too full at the end;

\* Near five feet four inches English measure.—*Transf.*

but taken with the rest, especially in profile, its effect is not amiss. My forehead, broad, high, with the hair retiring, at that early age, supported by a very elevated orbit of the eye, and marked by veins in the form of a Y, that dilated on the slightest emotion, was far from making such an insignificant figure as it does in many faces. As to my chin, which turns up a little at the end, it has precisely the marks attributed by physiognomists to the voluptuary. Indeed, when I combine all the peculiarities of my character, I doubt if ever an individual so well formed for pleasure, tasted it so little. A complexion clear rather than fair, a fresh colour, frequently heightened by the sudden flush of a rapid circulation excited by the most irritable nerves; a smooth skin, a well-turned arm, a hand, which, without being small, is elegant, because its long and taper fingers give it grace, and indicate address; teeth white and regular; and the plumpness of perfect health:—such are the gifts with which nature had endowed me. I have lost many of them, particularly the fulness of my form, and the bloom and ruddiness of my complexion; but those which remain still hide five or six years of my age, without any assistance of art, so that the persons who are in the daily habit of seeing me, will hardly believe me to be more than two or three and thirty. It is only since my beauty has begun to fade, that I know what was its extent: while in its bloom I was unconscious of its value, which was probably augmented by my ignorance.

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I do not regret its loss, because I have never abused it; but I certainly should not be sorry, provided my duty could be reconciled with my inclination, to turn the portion that remains to better account. My portrait has frequently been drawn, painted, and engraved, but none of these imitations gives an idea of my person\*: my likeness is very hard to hit, because the expression of my soul is more strongly marked than the lines of my countenance. This an artist of common abilities cannot represent; possibly he does not even see it. My face takes animation in proportion to the interest with which I am inspired, in the same manner as my mind is developed in proportion to the mind with which I communicate. I feel myself so stupid with many people, that upon perceiving my readiness with persons of wit, I have thought in the simplicity of my heart that I was indebted for it to their cleverness. I generally please, because I am fearful of offending; but it is not given to all to find me handsome, or to discover what I am worth. I can suppose that an old coxcomb, enamoured of himself, and vain of displaying the slender stock of science he has been so long in acquiring, might be in the habit of seeing me for ten years together without suspecting I could do more than cast up a bill, or cut out a shirt. It was not without reason that Camille Desmoulins was

\* The cameo of Langlois is the least defective.

astonished



astonished that ‘*at my age, and with so little beauty;*’ I had still what he calls adorers. I never spoke to him in my life, but it is probable that with a personage of his stamp I should be cold and silent, if not absolutely repulsive. He was not right in supposing me to hold a court. I hate gallants as much as I despise slaves, and know perfectly well how to get rid of a flatterer. What I want is esteem and goodwill; admire me afterwards if you please; but esteem and affection I must have at any rate : this seldom fails with those who see me often, and who possess, at the same time, a sound understanding and a heart.

That desire to please, which animates a youthful breast, and excites so delicious an emotion when we perceive the flattering looks of which we are the object, was curiously combined with my virgin bashfulness, and the austerity of my principles, and diffused a peculiar charm over my person and my dress. Nothing could be more decent than my garb, nor any thing more modest than my deportment : though wishing them to bespeak reserve, and aspiring only to neatness, the greatest commendations were bestowed upon my taste. Meanwhile, that renunciation of the world, that contempt of its pomps and vanities, so strongly recommended by christian morality, accorded ill with the suggestions of nature. Their contradictions at first tormented me, but my reasoning necessarily extended to rules of conduct, as well as to articles of faith. I applied



plied myself with equal attention to the investigation of what I ought to do, and the examination of what it was possible for me to believe : the study of philosophy, considered as the moral science, and the basis of happiness, became my only one, and I referred to it all my reading and observation.

The same thing happened to me in metaphysics and morality, that I had experienced in reading poetry : I fancied myself transformed into the personage of the drama that had most analogy with myself, or that I most esteemed ; and adopted the propositions, with the novelty or brilliancy of which I had been struck : they remained my own, till some newer or more profound discussion came in my way. Thus, in the controversial class, I sided with the authors of Port Royal ; their logic and their austerity agreed with my temper of mind, while I felt an instinctive aversion to the sophistical, evasive, and flexible faith of the Jesuits. When I became acquainted with the ancient sects of philosophers, I gave the palm to the stoics ; and endeavoured, like them, to maintain that pain was no evil. That folly could not last, but I persisted in determining at least not to be overcome by it ; and my little experiments convinced me that I could endure the greatest torments without uttering a cry. The night of my marriage destroyed the confidence I had till then preserved : it is true, surprise had some share in the business, and a novice of that rigid order may be expected to bear

bear an evil foreseen, better than one that came unawares, when the very contrary was looked for.

During two months that I studied Descartes and Malebranche, I considered my kitten, when she mewed, merely as a piece of mechanism performing its movements; but in thus separating sentiment from its signs, it seemed to me that I was dissecting nature, and robbing it of all its charms. I thought it infinitely more agreeable to give every thing a soul; and should have adopted that of Spinoza, rather than go without one. Helvetius hurt me: he annihilated the most ravishing illusions; and shewed me everywhere a mean and revolting self-interest: yet what sagacity! what happy ideas! I persuaded myself that Helvetius delineated mankind in the state to which they had been reduced by the corruption of society: I thought it right to study him, in order to frequent what is called the world, without being its dupe; but I took good care not to adopt his principles for the purpose of estimating man in his unadulterated state, or appreciating my own actions. I felt myself possessed of a generosity of soul, of which he denied the existence. With what delight did I oppose to his system the sublime traits of history, and the virtues of the heroes it has celebrated! I never read the recital of a glorious deed without saying to myself, 'It is thus that I should have acted.' I became a passionate admirer of republics,

lics, because it was there that I found the most virtues to awaken my admiration, and the men best deserving of my esteem. I was persuaded, that their form of polity was the only one calculated to produce both: I felt myself not unequal to the former; I rejected with disdain the idea of uniting myself with a man inferior to the latter; and I asked, with a sigh, why I was not born a republican.

My mother, my amiable little uncle, Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, and myself, made a journey to Versailles, which was solely intended to shew me the court, and the place it inhabited, and to amuse me with its pageantry. We lodged in the palace. Madam le Grand, the Dauphiness's woman, well known to the Abbé Bimont, by means of her son, who was his school-fellow, and of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, not being in waiting, lent us her apartment. It was a garret, in the same corridor with that of the Archbishop of Paris, and so closely adjoining, that it was necessary for the prelate to speak in a low tone of voice, to avoid being overheard: the same precaution was necessary on our part. Two rooms indifferently furnished, over one of which it was contrived to lodge a valet, and to which the avenue was dark, and rendered insupportable by the stench of the privies—such was the habitation which a duke and peer of France did not disdain to occupy, that he might be more at hand to go creeping every morning to their majesties levee: this prelate, however, was no other  
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than the rigid Beaumont. For one entire week we were constant spectators of the public and private dinners (*les petits et grand couverts*) of all the royal family, whether assembled in one party, or divided into several, and attended them at masques, in their walks, at their card parties, and in the drawing-room.

The different acquaintances of Madam le Grand facilitated our admission; while Mademoiselle d'Hannaches thrust herself forward with the greatest assurance upon every occasion, ready to throw her name in any one's face who should dare to oppose her passage, and taking it for granted, that they must needs read in her grotesque countenance six hundred years of well-ascertained nobility. She recollected two or three of the king's guards, whose pedigrees she recited with the greatest accuracy, taking care to prove herself precisely the relation of him whose name was the most ancient, and who appeared to me nevertheless to be a very insignificant personage at court. The handsome face of a spruce young clergyman, like my uncle Bimont, and the imbecil hauteur of the ugly d'Hannaches, were not wholly out of place at Versailles; but the cheeks of my respectable mother, unplastered with rouge, and the plainness of my apparel, bespoke us citizens; and if my youth or my eyes drew forth a word or two, they were modulated with a tone of condescension that gave me little less offence than the compliments of Madam Boismorel. Philosophy,

phy, imagination, sentiment, and calculation, were all busy upon this occasion. I was not insensible to the effect of a great display of magnificence, but I felt indignant at its being intended to set off a few certain individuals, already too powerful, though in themselves deserving little regard. I liked better to look at the statues in the gardens than at the great personages in the palace; and when my mother asked me if I were pleased with my excursion, ‘ Yes,’ said I, ‘ if it terminate speedily : if we stay but a few days longer, I shall so perfectly detest the people I see, that I shall not know what to do with my hatred.’—‘ Why, what harm do they do you ?’—‘ They give me the feeling of injustice, and oblige me every moment to contemplate absurdity.’ I sighed at the recollection of Athens, where I could have equally admired the fine arts, without being annoyed with the spectacle of despotism. Fancy transported me all over Greece; I assisted at the Olympic games, and was out of all patience at being a Frenchwoman. Enchanted with what I had seen in the golden period of the republic, I passed over the storms by which it had been agitated: I forgot the exile of Aristides, the death of Socrates, and the condemnation of Phocion. I little thought that heaven reserved me to be witness of errors, similar to those of which *they* were the victims, and to participate in the glory of the same persecution, after having professed the same principles. Heaven knows that  
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the misfortunes which affect only myself have exerted from me neither sighs nor complaints: I only feel those which afflict my country. At the time of the diffension between the court and the parliament in 1771, my disposition and opinions attached me to the party of the latter; I procured all their remonstrances, and was most pleased with those which contained the strongest things expressed in the boldest style. The sphere of my ideas continually enlarged. My own happiness, and the duties to the performance of which it might be attached, occupied my mind at a very early period; the love of knowledge made me afterwards study history, and turn my thoughts to every thing about me; the relation of our species to the divinity so variously represented, caricatured, and disfigured, attracted my attention; and at length the welfare of man in society fixed it to a determinate point.

In the midst of doubts, uncertainty, and investigation, relative to these important matters, I readily concluded, that the unity of the individual, if I may so express myself, that is to say, the most entire harmony between his opinions and actions, was necessary to his personal happiness. Accordingly, we ought to examine well what is right, and when we have found it, we should practise it rigorously. There is a kind of justice due to a man's self, even were he living in the world alone: it is incumbent on him so to regulate all his affections and habits, that he may be the slave of none. A  
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being is *good* in itself, when all its parts concur to its preservation, its maintenance, or its perfection : this is not less true in the moral, than in the physical world. Justness of organization, and an equipoise of humours, constitute health : wholesome aliments, and moderate exercise, preserve it. The due proportion of our desires, and the harmony of the passions, form the moral constitution, of which wisdom alone can secure the excellence and duration. Its first principles originate in the interest of the individual ; and in this respect it may be truly said, that virtue is nothing more than good sense applied to moral purposes. But virtue, properly so called, can only spring from the relations of a being with his fellow-creatures : a man is prudent as far as self is concerned, virtuous in regard to other people. In society every thing is relative : there is no independent happiness : we are obliged to sacrifice a part of what we might enjoy, in order to run no risk of losing the whole, and to keep a portion out of the reach of accident. Even here the balance is in favour of reason. However laborious may be the life of the honest, that of the vicious must be still more so. That man can seldom be tranquil, who stands in opposition to the interest of the majority ; it is impossible for him not to feel that he is surrounded by enemies, or by individuals about to become so ; and this situation is always painful, however flattering may be its appearances. Let us add to these considerations the sublime

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instinct, which corruption may mislead, but which no false philosophy can ever annihilate; which impels us to admire and love wisdom and generosity of conduct, as we do grandeur and symmetry in nature and the arts—and we shall have the source of human virtue independent of every religious system, of the idle fancies of metaphysics, and of the imposture of priests. As soon as I had combined and demonstrated these truths, my heart expanded with joy; they offered me a port in the storm, and I could now examine with less anxiety the errors of national creeds and social institutions. Can the sublime idea of a divine Creator, whose providence watches over the world, the immateriality of the soul, and its immortality, that consolatory hope of persecuted virtue, be nothing more than amiable and splendid chimeras? But in how much obscurity are these difficult problems involved? What accumulated objections arise when we wish to examine them with mathematical rigour! No; it is not given to the human mind to behold these truths in the full day of perfect evidence: but why should the man of sensibility repine at not being able to demonstrate what he feels to be true?

In the silence of the closet, and the dryness of discussion, I can agree with the atheist or the materialist, as to the insolubility of certain questions; but when in the country, and contemplating nature, my soul, full of emotion, soars aloft to the vivifying principle

principle that animates them, to the almighty intellect that pervades them, and to the goodness that makes the scene so delightful to my senses. Now, when immense walls separate me from all I love, and when all the evils of society fall upon us together, as if to punish us for having desired its greatest blessings, I see beyond the limits of life the reward of our sacrifices.

How? In what manner?—I cannot say; I only feel that so it ought to be\*.

The atheist is not, in my eyes, an evil-minded man: I can live with him as well, nay better than with the devotee; for he reasons more; but he wants a certain sense that I possess, and my mind does not perfectly harmonize with his: he is unmoved at the most enchanting spectacle, and is seeking for a syllogism, while I am offering up my thanksgivings.

It was not all at once that I fixed myself in this firm and peaceful seat, in which, enjoying the truths that are demonstrated to me, and giving

\* I write this on the 4th of September at eleven at night, the apartment next to me resounding with peals of laughter. The actresses of the *Theatre Français* were arrested yesterday, and conducted to St. Pélagie. To-day they were taken to their own apartments, to witness the ceremony of the taking off the seals, and are now returned to the prison, where the peace-officer is supping and amusing himself in their company. The repast is noisy and frolicsome; I catch the sound of coarse jests, while foreign wines sparkle in the goblet. The place, the object, the persons, and my occupation, form a contrast not a little curious.

way without scruple to feelings so full of delight, I am content to remain ignorant of what cannot be known, and give myself no disturbance about the opinions of others. I have here set down in a few words the result of several years of meditation and study, in the course of which I have sometimes shared in the sentiments of the deist, in the atheist's incredulity, and in the sceptic's indifference. But always sincere, because I had no inducement to change my faith in order to relax my morals, which were fixed upon principles that no prejudices could affect, I sometimes felt the agitation of doubt, but never the torment of fear. I conformed to the established worship, because my age, my sex, and my situation, made it my duty so to do; but, incapable of deceiving any one, I used to say to the Abbé Morel, ' I come to confession for the edification of my neighbour, and to preserve my mother's peace of mind; but I scarcely know of what to accuse myself: I lead so quiet a life, and my desires are so moderate, that my conscience has nothing to reproach me with, at the same time that I have no great merit in behaving with propriety. I am sometimes, however, too much taken up with the desire of pleasing, and give way to too great violence of temper, when any thing goes wrong. I am also too severe perhaps in my judgment of others; and, without suffering it to manifest itself, I conceive too hasty an aversion to those who appear to be stupid or dull; but in this I will be careful to

correct.



correct myself. In the last place, I am too absent and too careless while attending divine service ; for I acknowledge that we ought to be attentive to whatever we think it requisite to perform, be the motive what it may.' The worthy priest, who had exhausted his library and his rhetoric to keep me in the path of belief, had the good sense to be pleased at finding me so reasonable: he exhorted me, however, to distrust the spirit of pride ; represented to me the advantages of religion in the best way he was able ; thought proper to give me absolution ; and was tolerably well satisfied with my attending at the holy table three or four times a year, out of philosophical toleration, since it was no longer the work of faith. When I went to receive the divine aliment, I could not help thinking on the words of Cicero, who said, that, to complete the follies of men, with respect to the Deity, it only remained for them to transform him into food, and then to eat him. My mother's devotion growing greater every day, I became less able to deviate from the ordinary practices of religion ; for there was nothing that I dreaded so much as to afflict her.

The Abbé le Grand, my uncle Bimont's friend, sometimes visited us. He was a man of great good sense, who had nothing of his profession about him but his gown, in which he felt himself not a little awkward. His family had made him a priest, because one out of three sons must necessarily enter into holy orders. Appointed chaplain to the

prince of Lamballe, and pensioned after the death of his patron by Penthievre, he had settled himself in a parish merely that he might have a fixed residence, and had chosen it near his friend, in order to enjoy his society. Affected with great weakness of sight, he became blind at a very early age; and this accident, by fostering his taste for reflection, had given him a very meditative turn. He was fond of chatting with me, and often brought me books, generally works of philosophy, on the principles of which he spoke with great freedom. My mother hardly ever bearing a part in the discussion, I was afraid of carrying things to any great length: she did not, however, hinder me from reading, nor did she blame the choice of my subjects. A Genevese watchmaker, connected in business with my father, a worthy man, who always kept a book among his tools, and had a tolerable library, with which he was better acquainted than many great lords are with theirs; offered me the use of a treasure so suited to my taste, and I availed myself of his kindness. That kind M. Moré was a man of good sense, and could reason, not only concerning his art, but concerning morals and politics also; and though he expressed himself with a difficulty and tardiness, that my patience found it hard to support, he shared with most of his countrymen that solidity of intellect which makes amends for a want of the graces. From him I procured *Buffon*, and many other works. I mention this author by way of referring

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to what I have said, in a former part of my memoirs, of the discretion with which I read him. Philosophy, in calling forth the energies of my soul, and giving firmness to my mind, did not diminish the scruples of sentiment, or the susceptibility of my imagination, against which I had reason to be so much upon my guard. Natural philosophy first, and then mathematics, exercised my activity for a time. *Nollet*, *Réaumur*, and *Bonnet*, who indulges his fancy upon what others describe, amused me in their turns; as did *Maupertuis*, who enters into woful lamentations while particularizing the pleasures of snails. At length *Rivard* inspired me with the desire of becoming a geometrician. Guérin, a stone-mason and surveyor, who with all his simplicity was a man of great good sense and good nature, coming one day to talk with my father, found me so closely rivetted to Rivard's quarto, that I did not perceive his arrival. He entered into conversation with me, observed that *Clairaut's* Elements would much better answer the purpose I had in view; and the next day brought me the copy he had in his possession. I found it to contain a simple reduction of the first principles of the science, and recollecting at once that the work might be useful to me, and that I could not with decency detain it from the proprietor so long as I should like to keep it, I came to a resolution to copy it from the beginning to the end, including six plates of diagrams. I cannot help laughing at this operation

whenever it recurs to my mind ; any body but myself would have determined to buy the book, but the thought never came into my head, while the idea of copying it occurred as naturally as that of pricking a pattern for a ruffle, and was almost as soon effected ; for the work was but a small octavo. This curious manuscript is still, I believe, among my papers. I was amused with geometry as long as there was no need of algebra, with the dryness of which I was disgusted as soon as I had got through simple equations. I accordingly gave to the winds the multiplicity of fractions, and thought it better to feast upon a good poem than to starve myself with *roots*. In vain, some years after, did M. Roland, while paying his addressee, endeavour to recal my former taste ; we made, indeed, a great many figures ; but the science of reasoning by X and Y was never sufficiently attractive to obtain much of my attention.

*September 5. I cut the sheet to inclose what I have written in the little box ; for when I see a revolutionary army decreed, new tribunals formed for shedding innocent blood, famine impending, and the tyrants at bay, I augur that they must have new victims, and conclude that no one is sure of living another day.*

My

My correspondence with Sophia was still one of my greatest pleasures, the bonds of our friendship having been drawn closer by several journies which she had made to Paris. My susceptible heart stood in need, I will not say of a chimera, but of a principal object for its affections, especially for confidence and communication. Friendship offered them, and I cultivated it with delight. The footing I lived upon with my mother, agreeable as it was, would not have supplied the place of this affection; it had too much of the gravity resulting from respect on the one part, and of authority on the other. My mother might know every thing; I had nothing to conceal from her; but I could not tell her every thing: to a parent we may address confessions; but it is to an equal alone, that we entrust the secrets of the heart.

Accordingly, without asking to read the letters I wrote to Sophia, my mother was desirous that I should let her see them; and our arrangement in this respect had something whimsical in it. We had understood one another without a word on the subject. When I heard from my friend, which I did regularly every week, I read to her a few sentences of the letter, but did not communicate the whole. When I had written an answer, I left it for a day, made up and directed, upon my table, but unsealed; my mother scarcely ever failed to run it over, though seldom in my presence, or if it so happened, I always found some pretence



pretence for retiring. Whether she saw it or not, the period supposed necessary for her doing so being elapsed, I sealed my letter, but not always without adding a postscript. It never happened to her to make any mention of what she had read; but I did not fail to inform her by this means of all that I wished her to know of my disposition, my taste, and my opinions; and I set them forth with a freedom which I should not have dared to take with her in person. My frankness had its full scope, for I felt that I had a right to exercise it without any one's having a right to take it amiss. I have often thought since, that, had I been in my mother's place, I should have wished to become my daughter's friend in the fullest sense of the word; and if I have any regret at present, it is that mine is not what I was at that time: we should then be companions, and I should be happy. But my mother, though her heart was excellent, had something cold in her manner: she had more prudence than sensibility, and was rather reserved than affectionate. Perhaps too, perceiving an ardour in me that would have hurried me to greater lengths than herself, she so conducted herself, as to let me go on without restraint, but without familiarity. She was sparing of caresses, although her eyes beamed with tenderness and love, and were generally fixed upon me. I was sensible of the kindness of her heart, and my own returned the vibrations of affection; but the reserve that  
hung

hung about her, called forth a circumspection on my part, from which I should otherwise have been free. Any one would have supposed that the distance between us had increased when I was no longer a child. There was a dignity about my mother, of a gentle kind it is true, but it was dignity still. The transports of my ardent soul were repressed by it, and I only knew the full extent of my attachment to her, by the despair and delirium that I fell into at her death. My days passed away in delightful tranquillity. I spent the greater part in solitary studies, transported by my imagination to the remote ages of antiquity, of which I reviewed the history and the arts, and examined the precepts and opinions. Mafs in the morning, a few hours that we spent in reading together, our repasts and our visits, made up the only portion of time that I passed in my mother's company. We went abroad but seldom, and when visitors came who were not to my liking, I contrived to remain in my closet, which my mother was too kind to oblige me to quit. Sundays and holidays were devoted to our walks: sometimes we extended them to a considerable distance, and at last got into the habit of doing so, in consequence of the preference I gave to the country over the formal gardens of the metropolis. I was, however, by no means insensible to the pleasure of appearing occasionally in the public walks. They afforded, at that period, a very brilliant spectacle, in which the youth of both sexes

always

always had an agreeable part to play. Personal graces constantly obtained there the homage of admiration, which modesty cannot but perceive, and of which the heart of a young girl is always covetous. But it did not satisfy mine: I experienced after these walks, during which my vanity, powerfully excited, was upon the watch for whatever could shew me off to advantage, and prove to me that I had not lost my time, an insupportable vacuity, an uneasiness and disgust, which made the pleasures of vanity too dear a purchase. Accustomed to reflect, and to render an account of my sensations to myself, I made a strict inquiry into the cause of this inquietude, and found sufficient room to exercise my philosophy.

‘Is it then,’ said I to myself, ‘to please the eye, like the flowers of a parterre, and to receive a few evanescent praises, that persons of my sex are brought up in the practice of virtue, and enriched with talents? What means this intense desire of pleasure which preys upon me, and which does not make me happy, even when it should seem that it ought to be most gratified? What are to me the admiring eyes, and softly murmured compliments, of a crowd, of which I have no knowledge, and which is composed of persons, whom, did I know them, I should probably despise? Did I come into the world to waste my existence in frivolous cares and tumultuous sensations?—No: I have doubtless a nobler destination! The admiration which I

so

so ardently feel for whatever is virtuous, wife, exalted, and generous, tells me that I am called to practise these things. The sublime and rapturous duties of a wife and a mother will on some future day be mine ; it is in rendering myself capable of fulfilling them, that my early years ought to be employed ; I ought to study their importance, and to learn, by keeping my own inclinations within bounds, how to direct hereafter those of my children ; by the habit of governing my passions, and by the care of cultivating my mind, I ought to secure to myself the means of giving happiness to the most delightful of societies, of providing a never-failing source of felicity for the man who shall deserve my heart, and of communicating to all about us, a portion of the bliss with which I shall crown his wishes, and which ought to be the entire work of my own hands.'

Such were the thoughts that agitated my bosom. Overcome with emotion, I shed a flood of tears, while my heart exalted itself to that supreme intelligence, that first cause, that gracious providence, that principle of thought and of sentiment, which it felt the necessity of believing and acknowledging. ' O thou who hast placed me on the earth, enable me to fulfil my destination in the manner most conformable to thy divine will, and most beneficial to the welfare of my fellow-creatures.'

This unaffected prayer, as simple as the heart that dictated it, is become my only one ; never have  
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the doubts of philosophy, nor any species of dissipation, been able to dry up its source. In the midst of the tumult of the world, and in the depth of a dungeon, I have pronounced it with equal fervour. I pronounced it with transport in the most brilliant circumstances of my life ; I repeat it in fetters with resignation ; anxious in the former to guard against every affection unworthy of my situation ; careful in the latter to preserve the necessary fortitude for supporting me in the trials to which I am exposed ; persuaded that, in the course of things, there are events which human wisdom cannot prevent ; and convinced that the most calamitous ones cannot overpower a firm mind ; and that peace at home, and submission to necessity, are the elements of happiness, and constitute the true independence of the sage and of the hero.

The country presented objects more analogous to my habits of meditation, to my serious, tender, and pensive disposition, fortified by reflection and the developement of a feeling heart. We often went to Meudon : it was my favourite walk. I preferred its wild woods, its solitary ponds, its avenues of pines, and its towering trees, to the frequented paths and uniform coppices of the *Bois de Boulogne*, to the ornamented gardens of Belle-vue, or the clipt and right-lined vistas of St. Cloud.—  
 ‘ Where shall we go to-morrow, if the weather be fine ?’ said my father on the Saturday evenings during summer—He then looked at me with a smile—  
 ‘ shall



‘ shall we go to St. Cloud ? The water-works are to play : there will be a world of company.’—‘ Ah, papa ! if you would go to Meudon I should be much better pleased.’ By five o’clock on Sunday morning every body was stirring ; a light, neat, and simple dress, a few flowers, and a gauze veil, announced the project of the day. The odes of Rousseau, a volume of Corneille, or of some other author, were the only baggage I took with me. We set off all three, and embarked at the Pont-royal, which I could see from my window, on board of a little boat, that, in the silence of a smooth and rapid navigation, conducted us to the shores of Belle-vue, not far from the glass-house, of which the black column of smoke is visible at a considerable distance. Thence by a steep ascent we proceeded to the avenue of Meudon, about the middle of which stood a little cottage on the right, that became one of our resting-places. It was the abode of a milk-woman, a widow, who lived there, having two cows and some poultry. As it was advisable to make the most of day-light for our excursion, it was agreed it should serve us as a halting-place on our return, and that the good woman should furnish us with a bowl of milk from the cow. That was so regular a thing, that in walking up the avenue we never failed to call at the milk-woman’s to tell her we should be with her in the evening or the next morning, and not to forget the bowl of milk. The good woman re-  
ceived

ceived us with much kindness; and our repast, seasoned with a little brown bread and a great deal of good humour, had the appearance of a little feast, of which some memorial was sure to remain in the milk-woman's pocket. We took our dinner at the lodge of one of the porters belonging to the park: but the desire I had of striking into a solitary path led us to the discovery of a retreat very much to my taste. One day, after having wandered a long time in an unfrequented part of the wood, we came to an open and solitary spot, at the end of an avenue of lofty trees, under which a passenger was seldom seen. A few other trees scattered over a charming lawn served to mask a neat little cottage two stories high. 'Ah! what have we here?'—Two fine children were playing before the door, which was standing wide open. They had neither the appearance of children of the town, nor those ensigns of wretchedness so common in the country. We drew near; and perceived upon the left a kitchen garden, where an old man was at work. To walk in, and enter into conversation with him, was the business of a moment. We learned that the name of the place was *Ville-bonne*; that its inhabitant was the water-bailiff of the *Moulin Rouge*, whose office it was to see that the canals conveying water to different parts of the park were kept in repair; that the slender salary of that place helped to support a young couple, the parents of the children whom we had seen, and of whom

whom the old man was the grandfather ; and that the wife employed herself in the cares of the household, while he cultivated the garden, the produce of which, the son carried to town to sell at his leisure. The garden was a long square, divided into four parts, round each of which was a walk of sufficient width ; in the centre a basin of water, which facilitated the business of watering ; and at the farther end an arbour of yews inclosing a stone bench, affording at once both shelter and repose. Flowers interspersed among the culinary herbs gave the garden a gay and agreeable appearance ; while the robust and contented gardener, who conversed with equal good humour and good sense, reminded me of the old man of the banks of the Galesus, whom Virgil has sung. A taste for simplicity would alone have made such an encounter agreeable ; but my fancy did not fail to invest it with a thousand imaginary charms. We asked whether they were in the habit of affording entertainment to strangers ?—‘ Very few come here,’ said the old man ; ‘ the place is little known ; but when they do, we willingly serve up to them the produce of our farm-yard and our garden. We begged to have something for dinner, and were furnished with new-laid eggs, vegetables, and a salad, in a delightful arbour of honeysuckle behind the house. I never made so agreeable a repast : my heart dilated in contemplating the

tranquillity and innocence of so charming a situation. I fondled the little children, and expressed great veneration for the old man. The young woman seemed delighted at having us in the house. We were told that they had two rooms which they should have no objection to let to any body that would take them for three months, and we had some idea of taking them. But that agreeable project was never realized; nor have I ever been at Ville-bonne since; for Meudon had been our place of resort long before we made that discovery, and we had fixed upon a little inn in the village for our lodging whenever two holydays coming together permitted us to prolong our absence. It was at that inn, the sign of which I think was the Queen of France, we met with a laughable adventure. We were put into a room with two beds, in the largest of which I slept with my mother; the other in a corner served for my father alone. One night, just after he had got into bed, the fancy took him of drawing his curtains perfectly close, and he pulled them so strongly that the tester fell upon him and covered him up completely. After a moment of alarm, we all began to laugh very heartily at the accident; the tester having fallen exactly in such a way as to inclose my father without hurting him. We called for assistance to set him at liberty; the good woman of the house came; was astonished to see her bed decapitated; and exclaimed, with the ut-

most

most simplicity, ‘ My God! how could this happen ? it is seventeen years since the bed was put up ; and in all that time it has never budged an inch.’ The logic of the hostess made me laugh more than the fall of the tester. I often found an occasion to apply it, or rather to compare it with the arguments I heard in company ; and used to say to my mother in a whisper, This is quite as good as the seventeen years to prove that the bed ought not to have given way.

Delightful Meudon ! how often beneath thy refreshing shade have I blessed the great Author of my existence, desiring what might at some future time render it complete ; but it was that charming sentiment of desire without impatience, which only serves to gild the clouds of futurity with the rays of hope. How often in thy cool retreats have I gathered the variegated fern, and the brilliant flowers of the orchis ! How did I love to rest myself under the lofty trees bordering the glades, through which I used to see the swift and timorous doe go bounding along ! I recollect the more *sombre* spots, whither we retired during the heat of the day. There, while my father, stretched upon the greenward, and my mother, softly reclined on a heap of leaves which I had collected for the purpose, enjoyed their afternoon’s nap, did I contemplate the majesty of thy silent groves, admire the beauty of nature, and adore the Providence whose benefits I felt ! The glow of sentiment heightened the colour of my



humid cheeks, and my heart enjoyed all the delight of the terrestrial paradise. An account of my excursions, and of the pleasure they afforded me, found its way into my correspondence with Sophia: sometimes my prose was intermingled with verse, the irregular, but easy, and sometimes happy effusions of a mind to which all was picture, life, and felicity.

Sophia, as I have already observed, found herself thrown into a society, where she had none of the comforts which she knew me to enjoy in my solitude. I was acquainted with several of her family, and learned from their company to rate my retirement at a higher price.

In her journies to Paris with her mother she used to alight at the house of two cousins, whose names were *De Lamotte*. They were old maidens, one of whom, a stout devotee, never stirred from her chamber, where she said her prayers, scolded the servants, knitted stockings, and reasoned with tolerable acuteness about her personal interests: the other, a good sort of woman, sat in the parlour, did the honours of the house, read the psalms, and took a hand of cards. Both of them were very proud of their noble birth, and could scarcely conceive it possible to keep company with persons whose father at least had not been ennobled; and, without daring to wear it, carefully preserved the *sack* of which their mother had had the train borne after her to church, as a mark of family con-

consequence. They had taken under their care a young woman, their relation, whose slender fortune they purposed augmenting, provided she could find a gentleman to marry her. The young woman, *Mademoiselle d'Hangard*, was a tall, lusty brunette, of a ruddy complexion, and enjoying a state of health so vigorous as almost to alarm, whose rusticity of appearance ill concealed a petulant temper and a narrow mind. But the most curious piece of household goods was counsellor *Perdu*, a widower, who had consumed his estate in doing nothing, and who had been put to board with his cousins by his sister (my Sophia's mother), that he might pass the last years of his worthless existence in a decent way. Mr. *Perdu*, who was wonderfully plump and sleek, devoted the greater part of the morning to the care of his person, dined with an excellent appetite while cursing the dishes, and passed in dissertations at the *Luxemburg* \*, several hours of every day, which was sure to close with a game of piquet. He was still prouder of his gentility than his old cousins, and piqued himself upon having all the airs and principles of a man of noble birth. When speaking to Sophia of her uncle, I always called him *the commandant*, so strongly did he resemble *the commandant* in *Crebillon's Père de Famille*. The *commandant* then always assumed a great air of superiority with his nieces, affecting to temper it with the condescen-

\* A public garden at Paris.—*Transf.*

sions of politeness; but there was something whimsical in his behaviour to Mademoiselle d'Hangard, whose fresh complexion and continual presence, inflaming his imagination, inspired him with sensations which he dared not betray, and which sometimes put him out of humour with his nephew.

The nephew, who took the name of *Selincour*\*, was a tall young man, with a gentle look and a soft voice, not unlike his sister Sophia, sensible in his conversation, and agreeable in his manners, to which a sort of bashfulness was no disadvantage; such at least was my opinion, even when it became more than usually perceptible in his intercourse with me. Probabilities, and the wishes of the family, appeared to point him out as a proper suitor for Mademoiselle d'Hangard.

As to Mesdemoiselles Lamotte's society, it was composed of a *Count d'Essales*, created a Chevalier of St. Louis in Canada, where he had married the governor's daughter; taking care to keep at a respectful distance from great guns, ignorant, overbearing, and garrulous, he came to play a party of piquet with the Marchioness de *Cailiavelle*, an antiquated dowager, with whom he had more than one game going on, which the good old damsels did not perceive. Madam *Bernier*, a rigid Jansenist, but otherwise a sensible woman, whose hus-

\* In France it is customary for the sons to assume the names of the different estates, and sometimes such as are merely dictated by fancy.—*Transf.*

band had quitted the parliament of Brittany after the affair of la Chalotais, used to come also, but less frequently, with her two daughters, the one a scholar, the other a devotee. The tender heart of the latter would have gained my affection; but her wry neck supported with difficulty a head so crammed with religion, that there was no room for any thing like reason. The scholar, with rather too much loquacity, was possessed of judgment and taste enough just to render a repulsive figure supportable. But *M. de Vouglans* soared above them all. A delineation of his character would be superfluous to those who have read the book entitled *Reasons for my Faith in Jesus Christ, by a Magistrate*, and his *Collection of Penal Laws*, an elaborate compilation, in which equal industry, fanaticism, and atrocity were displayed. I never met with a man by whose sanguinary intolerance I was so much shocked. He took particular pleasure in conversing with father Romain Joly, a little old monk, Mefdemoiselles Lamotte's confessor, who made verses against Voltaire, in which he compared him to the devil, and who was for ever quoting in the pulpit the *Capitularies* of Charlemagne, and the edicts of our monarchs. I have had the good fortune to dine with him at the table of the Lamottes, to hear him preach at my own parish church, and to read his *Phaeton*; and he would afford me an excellent caricature, if I had courage enough to shake folly, hypocrisy, and the most puerile learning, out of his gown. Sophia's friend

made a curious figure in this society, of which the members lamented when her back was turned, that so well disposed a young woman was not of noble birth. I do not even doubt but that the commandant had, in his great wisdom, deliberated whether such a connexion were proper for his niece. But *the young woman* was well bred, and behaved with a decorum which the old maids highly approved; and unless when expressions escaped her, which *savoured of wit*, and which he was sure to animadvert upon to his nieces, the *commandant* himself could not altogether withhold his praise. He would even take charge of Sophia's letters, and bring them to my mother's; a thing that Selincour would have done more readily, if his sister had consented to entrust them to his care.

The insignificance and oddities of these personages, to whom, no doubt, many people of the great world bore a resemblance, made me reflect on the inanity of fashionable circles, and the advantage of not being obliged to frequent them. Sophia enumerated all the persons with whom she associated at Amiens, and gave me a sketch of their characters, which enabled me to judge of the insignificance of most of them; so that when the balance was struck, it appeared that, at the end of the year, I had seen in my solitude more people of merit, than she had perceived in her round of routs and assemblies. This may easily be conceived, when it is remembered that my father's business connected him with none but artists, many of whom came occasionally to the house,



house, though none were regular visitors. Those who inhabit the capital, even if not of the first rank, acquire a fund of information, and a kind of urbanity, which most assuredly is neither to be found among the little provincial gentry, nor among mercantile people in haste to make a fortune that may serve as the means of ennobling their family. The conversation of the worthy *Jollain*, a painter of the academy, of the honest *l'Epine*, a pupil of Pigal, of *Desmarteau*, who professed the same art as my father, of *Falconet's* son, of *d'Hauterne*, whom his talents would have borne on rapid wings to the academy, if his quality of Protestant had not been an exclusion, and of the Genevese watch-makers *Ballaxferd* and *More*, the former of whom has written upon Physical Education, was certainly far preferable to that of the opulent *Cannet*, who upon seeing the success of a tragedy written by his kinsman Belloy, and calculating the profits, exclaimed in sober sadness, 'Why did not my father teach me to compose tragedies? I could have worked upon them on Sundays and holydays.'—And yet these wealthy blockheads, these pitiful possessors of purchased nobility, these impertinent soldiers like *d'Effales*, and these wretched magistrates like *Vougians*, considered themselves as the props of civil society, and actually enjoyed privileges which merit could not obtain. I compared these absurdities of human arrogance with the pictures of Pope, tracing its effects in the satisfaction of the artisan, who is as proud of his

his leather apron as the king of his crown. I endeavoured to think with him, that every thing was right ; but my pride told me that things were ordered better in a republic.

There is no doubt that our situation in life has a considerable influence on our characters and opinions : but, in the education I received, in the ideas I acquired, whether by study or by observation of the world, every thing may be said to have concurred in inspiring me with republican enthusiasm, by making me perceive the folly, or feel the injustice, of a multitude of privileges and distinctions. Accordingly, in all my readings, I took the side of the champions of equality ; I was Agis and Cleomenes at Sparta ; the Gracchi at Rome ; and, like Cornelia, I should have reproached my sons with being called nothing but the mother-in-law of Scipio. I retired with the plebeians to the Aventine hill ; and gave my vote to the tribunes. Now that experience has taught me to appreciate every thing with impartiality, I see in the enterprise of the Gracchi, and in the conduct of the tribunes, crimes and mischiefs, of which I was not at that time sufficiently aware.

When I happened to be present at any of that sort of fights which the capital so frequently afforded, such as the *entry* of the queen or princesses, *thanksgiving* after a lying-in, &c. I compared with grief, this Asiatic luxury and insolent pomp, with the abject misery of the *brutified* populace,  
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who prostrated themselves before idols of their own making, and foolishly applauded the ostentatious magnificence which they paid for by depriving themselves of the necessaries of life. The dissolute conduct of the court during the last years of Lewis XV. that contempt of morality, which pervaded all ranks of the nation, and those excesses, which were the subject of all private conversation, filled me with astonishment and indignation. Not perceiving as yet the germs of a revolution, I inquired with surprise, how things could subsist in such a state? Observing in history, the invariable decline and subversion of empires when arrived at this pitch of corruption, and hearing the French nation singing and laughing at its own misfortunes, I felt that our neighbours, the English, were right in regarding us as children. I attached myself to those neighbours; the work of De Lolme had familiarised me with their constitution; I sought an acquaintance with their writers, and studied their literature, but as yet only through the medium of translations.

The arguments of Ballexferd not having been able to overcome my parents' repugnance to having me inoculated, I caught the small-pox when eighteen years of age. The era has left deep impressions on my mind; not from any apprehensions on account of the disorder, for I had already too much philosophy not to support such a trial with fortitude; but from my mother's incredible and  
affecting

affecting solicitude. What sorrow, and yet what activity ! In what agitation was she kept by her uneasiness ! and what tenderness was displayed in all her attentions ! Even during the night, when I thought I was taking something from the nurse, I felt my mother's hand, and heard her voice while getting out of her bed every moment to come to the side of mine ; her anxious eyes devoured the looks, and, if I may so express myself, the words of my physician ; and in spite of her resolution to suppress them, the tears stole from her eyes, when looking at me, while I endeavoured, in vain, by a cheerful aspect, to pacify her feelings. Neither she nor my father had ever had the small-pox, and yet neither of them would suffer a day to pass without kissing the disfigured cheek, which I strove in vain to keep out of their way, for fear the contact should be followed by fatal effects. My Agatha, grieved at being confined to her cloister, sent me one of her relations, the amiable mother of four children, whom she had inspired with a portion of her attachment to me, and who obstinately persisted in seeing and embracing me without consideration for herself. It was thought proper to conceal from Sophia, who was then at Paris, the condition of her friend. I was supposed to have set off suddenly for the country, that the period of contagion might elapse without our meeting ; but Selincour called every day on the part of his mother to inquire after my health ; and I heard from my chamber his mournful

ful exclamation when he was told, that a complication of the putrid fever and small pox was feared. I had the miliary fever; the eruption peculiar to which, checking the other, the pustules of small-pox were few, and though large, subsided without suppuration, and left only a dry skin, that fell off of itself. It is the kind of small-pox, said Dr. Missa, that the Italians call *ravaglioni*, pustules of false suppuration, which leave no vestiges behind; and in reality not even the polish of the skin was impaired: but the ravages made by the variolous humour threw me into a state of languor and debility, from which it was four or five months before I was completely recovered. Sedate in health, too tender to be gay, but patient under affliction, my sole object in sickness is to divert my attention from my sufferings, and to render agreeable the troublesome attentions I require from those about me. Indulging my imagination in the most fanciful flights, I say extravagant things: it is the sick person that furnishes those in health with amusement.

Doctor Missa was a sensible man, whom I was very much pleased with. As he was sufficiently advanced in years to relieve me from the constraint that I was kept in by younger men, we conversed freely in his visits, which he willingly prolonged; and conceived a friendship for each other. One or other of us, said he, one day, has been much in the wrong. Either I am come too soon, or you too late. Though Missa's good sense had disposed me  
favour-



favourably towards him, his age had prevented me from perceiving that I had been in the wrong to come later than he: I made him no other answer than a smile. He was bringing up nieces, with whom he wished me to be acquainted, and we sometimes visited; but as they never went out without their governess, any more than I without my mother, and as the uncle's profession did not leave him leisure to keep up the connexion between us, it came to nothing in consequence of our distant abodes and sedentary habits. Missa scolded me very much one day upon finding Malebranche's *Recherche de la Verité* lying on my bed. 'Why, my God!' said I, 'if all your patients were to amuse themselves in the same way, instead of getting angry with their diseases and their doctor, you would have a great deal less to do.'—The persons who chanced to be then in my room, were talking of some loan or other, of which the edict of creation had just made its appearance, and to which all Paris was running in crowds. 'The French,' said Missa, 'take all upon *trust*.'—'Say rather,' answered I, 'upon *appearances*.'—'True,' replied he; 'the expression is just and profound.'—'Don't scold me then for reading Malebranche,' said I eagerly; 'you see that my time is not thrown away.'

Missa was at that time accompanied in his visits by a young physician, who had recently taken his degree, and whom he sometimes dispatched before him to wait his arrival. This youthful graduate, to  
 borrow

borrow Miffa's expreffion, could not be reproached with coming too foon into the world; but though he had a tolerably handsome face, there was a felf-fufficiency about him that I did not like. I have naturally fo decided an averfion to affectation and airs of confequence, that I always confider them as a fign of an indifferent underftanding, if not of abfolute imbecility; though it is certain that, under the old government, they were fometimes no more than the follies of youth. In fhort, fo far from pleafing me, they put me out of humour, and always make me conceive an ill opinion of the perfon by whom they are difplayed. Thefe are the only traces left in my memory by the young doctor, whom I have never feen fince, and whom I fhall probably never fee again.

An excursion to the country being neceffary for the perfect re-eftablifhment of my health, we went to breathe its falutary air at the houfe of M. and Madam Befnard, with whom two years before my mother and I had fpent almoft the whole month of September. Their fituation was admirably calculated to feed my philofophy, and to fix my meditations upon the vices of focial life.

Madam Befnard, upon the reverse of fortune which fhe had experienced in common with her fifters, had entered into the family of a *fermier-general*, whose houfe fhe fuperintended: it was that of old Haudry. There fhe had married the fteward, M. Befnard, with whom fhe had long fince retired  
from

from the world, and was living in peace and happiness, though in an humble way.

The ill-placed pride of Madam Philpon had led her sometimes to express, in my presence, and in the privacy of the family, how much this marriage had displeased her; but, as far as I can judge, she was certainly offended without cause. M. Bessard was a man of integrity and good moral character, each of which was the more praiseworthy in proportion as it was difficult to meet with among men in the same line of life. The whole of his conduct to his wife exhibited the greatest delicacy of sentiment. It is impossible to carry veneration, tenderness, and attachment, to a greater length. Enjoying the sweets of a perfect union, they still prolong a career, in which, like Baucis and Philemon, they attract the respect of all who witness their simplicity of life, and their virtues. I esteem it an honour to be related to them; and should do so still, if, with the same character and conduct, M. Bessard had been a footman.

Old Haudry, who owed his fortune to his own exertions, was dead; and had left a large fortune to a son, who, being born in opulence, was likely to squander it away. That son, who had already lost a charming wife, lived at a great expence; and, according to the custom of the rich, spent a small part of the year at the chateau of Soucy, whither he was much more apt to carry the manners of the town, than to adopt those that were suitable  
to

to the country. He had several contiguous estates, of which that nearest to Soucy (Fontenay) had an old mansion belonging to it that he was fond of filling with inhabitants. He had given a lodging there to a notary and an overseer, and requested M. Bessard to take an apartment, which might serve him as a residence during part of the summer. This was no bad way of keeping his estate in good order, at the same time that it gave him an air of magnificence. M. and Madam Bessard were well accommodated, and enjoyed the pleasure of walking in a park, the wildness of which made an agreeable contrast with the gardens of Soucy, and pleased me more than the luxury that distinguished the *farmer-general's* abode. As soon as we arrived at Madam Bessard's, she requested us to go and pay a visit to Soucy, where Haudry's sister-in-law and step-mother resided with him, and did the honours of his house. The visit was modestly paid before dinner. I walked without the smallest pleasurable sensation into the drawing-room, where Madam Penault and her daughter received us with great politeness, it is true, but it was a politeness that favoured a little of superiority. My mother's manner however, and something which appeared in me also in spite of that timidity which proceeds from a consciousness of our worth, and a doubt of its being perceived by others, scarcely allowed them to assume any consequence. I received compliments which gave me little pleasure, and which

I was answering with some degree of ingenuity, when certain parasites, of the order of St. Lewis, who always haunt the mansions of opulence, as ghosts resort to the banks of the Acheron, thought proper to interrupt me with exaggerated praise.

The ladies did not fail, a few days after, to return our visit. They were attended by the company that happened to be at the chateau, the visit to Fontenay serving them for a walk. Upon that occasion, I was more engaging than before, and contrived to put into my share of the reception, such a portion of modest and dignified politeness, as re-established the equilibrium between us. It once happened to us to be invited to dinner by Madam Penault; but never was astonishment equal to mine, when I learned that we were not to dine at her table, but with the upper servants in the hall. I was sensible however, that, as M. Besnard had formerly played a part there, I ought not, out of respect to him, to appear dissatisfied at appearing in such a character; but I was of opinion that Madam Penault might have ordered things otherwise, and have spared us the contemptuous civility. My great aunt saw it in the same light; but, to avoid giving offence, we accepted the invitation. It was something new to me to mix with those deities of the second order; nor had I the least idea of what chambermaids were when giving themselves airs of consequence. They were prepared to receive us; and, indeed, played the  
doubles



doubles of their superiors admirably well. Dress, gesture, affectation, graces, nothing was forgotten. Their mistresses cast-off clothes, which were hardly soiled, gave a richness to their appearance, that decent persons in trade would have thought out of character. The caricature of fashionable manners superadded a sort of elegance, not less foreign to mercantile simplicity than to the taste of an artist, though there is no doubt but their flippancy of speech, and finery, might have imposed on country ladies. It was still worse with the men. The sword of Mr. steward, the attentions of Mr. cook, and the politeness and gaudy clothes of the valet-de-chambre, could not atone for the awkwardness of their manners and the blunders in their language, when they wished it to be elegant, nor the vulgarity of their expressions when they forgot their parts. The conversation was full of marquises, counts, and financiers, whose titles, fortunes, and alliances, seemed to confer grandeur, riches, and importance upon those who were talking of them. The superfluities of the first table were spread upon the second with a neatness and order which gave them the air of a first appearance, and in such abundance as afterwards to suffice for the third table, that of the *domestics*, properly so called; for the persons who sat at the second were called *officers*. Play followed the repast: the stake was high; it was what the *ladies* were accustomed to play for, and they played

every day. I was introduced to a new world, in which were exhibited the prejudices, the vices, and the follies of a world, very little better, in spite of its greater show. I had heard a thousand times of the origin of old Haudry, who came to Paris from his village; found means to rake thousands together at the expence of the public; married his daughter to Montulé, and his grand-daughters to the Marquis Duchillau and Count Turpin, and left his son heir to an immense estate. I recollected Montesquieu's expression, who says, that financiers support the state as the cord supports the criminal; nor could I help thinking that tax-gatherers who contrive to amass such enormous sums, and then to make their opulence serve as the means of an alliance with families, which the policy of courts affects to consider as necessary to a kingdom's splendour and defence, must needs belong to a detestable government, and to a nation highly corrupt. I little thought there was a government still more horrible, and a degree of corruption still more to be deplored. Who, indeed, could have imagined it? All the philosophers of the age have been deceived as well as I.—I allude to the government and corruption of the present time.

Every Sunday there was a dance at Soucy in the open air, under no other shelter than the trees. Gaiety, on these occasions, obliterated distinctions in a great degree; and as soon as personal

sonal merit was attended to, I had little fear of missing the place that might chance to suit me best. The new comers used to ask, in a whisper, who I was, but I took care to give nobody a surfeit of my company; and, after an hour's recreation, withdrew with my relations for a walk, of which I would not have exchanged the tranquil enjoyments for all the empty and noisy pleasures that attend any kind of parade.

I sometimes saw Haudry, who was then young, acting the great man, gratifying all his fancies, and wishing to appear generous and noble. His family began to be uneasy at his extravagance with the courtesan La Guerre, by which he was already laying the foundation of his future ruin. He was pitied as imprudent, rather than blamed as vicious; he was a spoiled child of fortune, who, had he been born in moderate circumstances, would certainly have turned out a better man. With a dark complexion, an erect carriage, the airs of a great man, and courteous manners, he was perhaps amiable among those whom he esteemed his equals: but I hated to come in his way, and never failed, when in his presence, to assume an air of dignified reserve.

Last year, coming out of that magnificent dining-room which the elegant Calonne had fitted up in the controller-general's hotel, since occupied by the minister of the interior, I found in my way through the second antichamber, a tall grey-headed old man, of decent appearance, who accosted me

respectfully: 'I should be very glad, Madam, to speak with the minister, when his dinner is over; I have something to communicate to him.'—  
 'Sir, you will see him in an instant: he has been detained in the next room; but will be here immediately.' I made my curtesy, and proceeded to my own apartment, where Roland soon after joined me. I inquired if he had seen a person, whom I described, and who appeared apprehensive of not meeting him?—'Yes, it was M. Haudry.'—  
 'What, the quondam *farmer-general*, who squandered an immense fortune?'—'The same.'—  
 'And what has he to do with the minister of the interior?'—'Our business relates to the manufactory at Sévres, at the head of which he has been placed.' What a theme for meditation do these sports of fortune furnish! I had already found one when I entered for the first time into the apartments occupied by Madam Necker in the days of her glory. I occupy them a second time, and they do but the more strongly attest the instability of the things of this world; but I will at least take care, that no reverse of fortune shall find me unprepared. Such were my reflections in October 1792, when Danton was conferring some celebrity upon me, by detracting from my husband's merit, and was silently preparing the calumnies, by which he meant to assail both. I was ignorant of his proceedings, but I had observed the course of things in revolutions. I was  
 only

only ambitious of preserving my mind uncontaminated, and of seeing my husband's reputation free from stain. I well knew this kind of ambition seldom leads to any other species of success. My wish is accomplished: Roland, persecuted and proscribed, will not be forgotten by posterity. I am a captive, and shall probably be sacrificed; but my conscience stands in the stead of every thing. It will happen to me as it did to Solomon, who asked only for wisdom, and obtained other advantages: I wished only for the peace of the righteous, and *I also* shall have some existence in future times.—But in the mean while let us return to Fontenay.

The little library of my relations afforded some employment to my mind. I found there the whole of *Puffendorf*, tedious perhaps in his universal history, and more interesting to me in his *Duties of the Man and the Citizen*; the *Maison Rustique*, and a variety of works on agriculture and economy, which I studied for want of others, because it was necessary that I should always be learning something; the agreeable trifles which *Bernis* wrote in verse, when he was unfettered by the *Roman purple*; a life of *Cromwell*; and a curious medley of other productions.

Here I cannot help remarking, that, in the multitude of books which chance or other circumstances had thrown in my way, and of which I mention loosely such as places and persons recal



to my memory, nothing by Rousseau has yet been noticed: the truth is, I read him very late; and it was well for me I did: he would have turned my brain, and I should have read nothing else. Perhaps as it is, he has but too much strengthened my weak side, if I may be allowed to make use of such an expression.

I have reason to believe that my mother had taken some care to keep him out of my way; but his name not being unknown to me, I had sought after his works, and was already acquainted with his Letters from the Mountain, and his Letter to Christopher de Beaumont, when I lost her, having then read the whole of Voltaire and Boulanger, the Marquis d'Argens and Helvetius, and many other philosophers and critics. Probably my mother, who saw plainly that my mind must needs be employed, was not much averse to my making a serious study of philosophy at the risk even of a little incredulity; but she was of opinion, no doubt, that no stimulants were wanting for my susceptible heart, already too obedient to the impulse of the passions.— Good heavens! how vain are all our endeavours to escape from our destiny! The same idea influenced her, when she prevented me from studying painting, and made her also oppose my learning to play upon the harpsichord, though I had a most excellent opportunity. Our living in the same neighbourhood had made us acquainted with an Abbé Jeauket, a great musician, and a good-natured man,  
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but as ugly as sin, and addicted to the pleasures of the table. He was born in the environs of Prague, had passed many years at Vienna, attached to the nobles of the court, and had given lessons to Marie Antoinette. After having been induced to visit Lisbon by particular circumstances, he had at last chosen Paris, in order to spend in a state of independence, the pensions of which his little fortune was composed. He wished exceedingly that my mother would permit him to teach me the harpsichord. He insisted upon it that my fingers and my head would soon go a great length, and that I could not fail to become a composer. ‘What a shame,’ he would cry, ‘to be humming over a guitar, when possessed of powers to invent and execute the finest pieces upon the first of instruments!’ This enthusiasm, and his reiterated entreaties, carried even to supplication, could not overcome my mother’s reluctance: as to me, though always ready to avail myself of any instruction that came in my way, I was so much accustomed to respect her decisions, as well as to love her person, that I never importuned her for any thing. Besides, study in general afforded me so vast a field of occupation, that I never felt the pains of idleness. I often said to myself, When I become a mother in my turn, it will be my business to make use of what I shall have acquired: I shall then have no leisure for further studies; and I was the more earnest to turn my time to account, and afraid of losing a single moment. The Abbé Jeauket

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was now and then visited by persons of merit, and whenever he invited them to his house, was anxious to include us in his party. Thus, among other individuals not worth remembering, I became acquainted with the learned Rouffier, and the worthy d'Odiment; but I have not forgotten the impertinent Parabelle and Madam de Puisieux. Parabelle was a huge monster, in the garb of an abbé, the greatest coxcomb and romancer of all the fools I ever met with, who pretended to have kept a carriage at Lyons for twenty years, and who, to keep himself from starving at Paris, was obliged to give lectures on the Italian language, in which he was very little versed. Madam Puisieux, who passed for author of the *Characters*, to which her name is prefixed, retained at the age of sixty, with a hump back and toothless gums, the little airs and pretensions, of which the affectation is scarcely pardonable even in youth. I had fancied that a female author must needs be a very respectable personage, especially one who had written upon morals. But Madam de Puisieux's absurdities made me change my mind. Her conversation bespoke very little wit, and her whims indicated very little judgment. I began to perceive it was possible to collect a great deal of reason, in order to make a display of it, without consuming much for our own purposes, and that the men who made a jest of female authors were perhaps no otherwise to blame than in applying to them exclusively, what is equally applicable

cable to themselves. Thus it was, that in a sphere of life exceedingly confined, I found means to add to my stock of observations. I was in a solitary spot; but it was on the confines of the world, and so situated as to allow me to distinguish a great variety of objects without any of them standing in my way. The concerts of Madam l'Epine enlarged my prospect. I have already said that l'Epine was a pupil of Pigal: he was, indeed, his right hand. At Rome he had married a woman, who, I presume, had been an opera singer, and whom his family had at first looked upon with an evil eye, but who proved, by the propriety of her conduct, that she did not deserve their disdain.

She had a concert of amateurs, composed of excellent musicians, to which nobody was admitted but what she called good company. They met every Thursday at her house, whither I was often taken by my mother; and there I heard *Jarnewick, St. George, Dupont, Guerin*, and many others. There too I met wits of both sexes: *Mademoiselle de Morville, Madam Benoit, Silvain-Marechal, &c.* with haughty baronesses, handsome abbés, old chevaliers, and young fops. What a curious magic lantern! The apartments of Madam l'Epine, in the *Rue Neuve St. Eustache*, were not remarkably superb, nor was the concert-room spacious, but adjoining to another, of which the folding-doors were set open: there, ranged in a circle, the company had

had the several advantages of hearing the music, seeing the actors, and being able to converse between the acts. Seated by my mother, and keeping the silence that custom prescribes to young women, I was all eyes and ears; but when we chanced to be for a moment in private with Madam l'Epine, I asked her a few questions, the answers to which elucidated my observations.

One day that lady proposed to my mother to accompany her to a *charming* assembly, held at the house of a man of wit, whom we had sometimes seen at her concerts: the company consisted of enlightened men, and women of taste; very agreeable productions were recited: it was indeed *delightful*! The proposal was made several times before it was accepted: 'Let us go,' said I to my mother; 'I begin to know enough of the world to presume that it must either be very agreeable or very absurd; and even in the latter case, it will serve to amuse us once. The party was agreed upon; and on the Wednesday, the day on which M. Vase's literary assembly was regularly held, we repaired with Madam l'Epine to his residence at the *Barrier du Temple*. After toiling up three pair of stairs we came to a moderately spacious apartment, furnished like a barrack: rush-bottomed chairs, marshalled in close order, and in several ranks, were ready to receive the spectators, and began to be filled; while tallow candles in dirty brass candlesticks illumined this retreat of the

musics,



muses, the grotesque simplicity of which accorded well with philosophical rigour and the poverty of an author. Well-dressed women, young girls, antiquated dowagers, poetasters in abundance, loungers, and adventurers, composed the society.

The master of the house, seated at a table, which served as a desk, opened the sitting by reading a piece of poetry of his own composition: the subject was a little marmoset which the old Marchioness de Préville always carried in her muff, and which she exhibited to the company; for she was there, and thought she could do no less than gratify the eager eyes of the persons present with a sight of the hero of the piece. Loud *bravos* and applauses did justice to M. Vâse's poetic flights. M. Vâse, highly satisfied with himself, wished to give up his seat to M. Delpêches, a poet who wrote little comic dramas for the theatre of Audinot, concerning which he was accustomed to take the opinion of the society, or, in other words, the encouragement of its applause; but that day he was prevented either by a sore throat, or the want of a few verses in some of his scenes. Imbert, the author of the *Judgment of Paris*, was therefore obliged to take the chair, and read an agreeable trifle, which was extolled to the skies. His reward awaited him. Mademoiselle de la Cossionnière came next with a *Farewel to Colin*, which if not very ingenious, was at least very tender. It was known directly that it was addressed to Imbert,

about

about to undertake a journey, and a shower of compliments was poured upon him. Imbert discharged his own debt, and that of his muse, by saluting all the females in the assembly. The free and gay ceremony, though conducted with decency, was not at all pleasing to my mother, and appeared in so strange a light to me as to give me an air of embarrassment. After some epigram or distich by no means remarkable, a man of pompous declamation recited a poem in praise of Madam Benoit. She was sitting by, and must be briefly mentioned, for the sake of those who have not read her romances, which were dead long before the revolution, and will be buried beneath heaps of dust before my memoirs see the light.

Albine was born at Lyons, as I have read in the *History of the illustrious Women of France, by a Society of Men of Letters*; a history, in which I was quite astonished to find women whom I met with everywhere, as the lady in question, Madam de Puisieux, Madam Champion, and many more, some of whom perhaps are still alive at the moment I am writing, or have only quitted this terrestrial abode within a few years.

Having united herself in the holy bands of wedlock with Benoit, a draughtsman, she had accompanied him to Rome, and had there been admitted a member of the academy of the *Arcades*. Lately become a widow, and still in mourning for her husband, she had settled at Paris, where she made  
verses

verses and novels, sometimes without writing them, kept a gaming-house, and visited women of quality, who paid in presents of money or clothes for the pleasure of having a female wit at their tables.

Madam Benoit had been handsome : the cares of the toilet, and the desire of pleasing, prolonged beyond the age which insures their success, still procured her a few conquests. Her eyes canvassed for them with such ardour; her bosom, always bare, palpitated so anxiously to obtain them; that it was impossible not to grant to the frankness of desire, and the facility of satisfying it, what men bestow at all times so readily, when constancy is not required. Madam Benoit's air of undisguised voluptuousness, was something new to me. I had seen in the public walks those priestesses of pleasure, whose indecency announced their profession in the most disgusting manner; but her's was quite a different style. I was no less struck by the poetical incense lavished on her, and by the epithets of the *chaste* and *virtuous* Benoit, which occurred repeatedly in the poem, and obliged her now and then to cover her eyes modestly with her fan, while some of the men rapturously applauded those encomiums, which they doubtless conceived to be admirably applied. I recollected all that my reading had enabled me to conceive on the subject of gallantry, and calculated what corruption of heart and perversion of mind must be superadded by the man-  
ners

ners of the age, and the disorders of the court. I saw effeminate men giving all their admiration to flimsy verses, to frivolous talents, and to the desire of seducing every woman that came in their way, and certainly without loving them; for he who devotes himself to the happiness of a beloved object, does not court the looks of the crowd. I experienced a sensation of disgust and misanthropy in the midst of objects that spoke to my imagination, and returned to my solitude in a melancholy mood. We never repeated our visit to M. Vase: I had had quite enough of it; and Imbert's kisses, and the panegyric of Madam Benoit, would at any rate have cured my mother of all desire to take me there again. Neither did the concert of the Baron de Back, very curious, but frequently rendered very tedious also by the pretensions of that musical maniac, see much of us, notwithstanding the cards of invitation which Madam l'Epine's politeness often procured us. The same reserve was extended to that known as the *concert of amateurs*, which was numerously attended. We went there but once, attended by a M. Boyard de Creusy, who had amused himself in composing new instructions for the guitar, of which he begged my mother's permission to offer me a copy. He was a man of polite manners, and I mention him here because he had the good sense to believe, that, in a situation still regarded by the vulgar as elevated, I should  
be

be pleased to see the persons with whom I had been acquainted in my youth. He called on me in the *hôtel de l'intérieur*, while Roland was in the ministry ; and the reception he met with was such as must have convinced him, that I derived satisfaction from the remembrance of a time, on which I have reason to value myself, and indeed on every other period of my life.

As to public places, it was still worse ; my mother never went there ; and I was taken but once during her life to the Opera, and once to the *Theatre Français*. I was then about sixteen or seventeen. *The Union of Love and the Arts*, by Floquet, contained nothing either in the music, or the drama, capable of creating illusion, or of supporting the idea I had formed of theatrical enchantment. The coldness of the subject, the incoherence of the scenes, and awkward intrusions of the ballets, displeased me. I was still more disgusted with the dress of the dancers, who had not then laid aside their hoops : I had never seen any thing so absurd. Accordingly I thought the critique of Piron on the wonders of the Opera much superior to the Opera itself. At the *Theatre Français* the play was the *Ecoffoïse*, which was not very well calculated to inspire me with enthusiasm for the drama ; the performance of Mademoiselle Dumefnil alone delighted me. My father sometimes carried me to the theatres of the Foire St.



Germain\*. Their mediocrity inspired me with disgust. Thus was I armed against every temptation to play the *bel esprit*, precisely as the Spartan children were against drinking, by seeing the consequences of excess. My imagination received none of the great shocks which the fascination of the theatre might have produced, had I been present at the representation of the finest pieces. What I had seen made me content with reading in my closet the works of the great masters of the drama, and with enjoying their beauties at my leisure.

A young man, a constant attendant at Madam l'Epine's concerts, had thought proper to call in her name at my mother's, to inquire for us, when an absence unusually prolonged could justify the supposition of our being indisposed. A genteel deportment, an agreeable vivacity, a great deal of good sense, and above all, the unfrequency of his visits, procured him his pardon for the little contrivance to get admission into the house. At last La Blancherie hazarded his declaration.—But since I am come to the history of my suitors, I must march them off *en masse*; a delicate expression, that may serve as a date to my writings,

\* The inferior play-houses at Paris are called *Theatres forains*; because they remove for the few weeks it lasts to the Foire St. Germain, a fair at Paris not very unlike St. Bartholomew's at London. The rest of the year they perform in neat little theatres upon the *Boulevards*.—*Trans.*

and recal to mind these glorious days, when every thing is ordered *en masse*, in spite of the greatest possible subdivision of will and inclination.

The reader cannot have forgotten the Spanish colossus, with hands like Esau's, the polite M. Mignard, whose name made such a curious contrast with his face\*. After confessing, of his own accord, that he was capable of teaching me nothing further on the guitar, he had begged permission to call now and then to hear me, and came at distant periods, without being always sure of finding us at home. Flattered with the skill of his young scholar, looking upon it as his own work, imagining that he thence derived some sort of right, or of excuse, and giving himself out for a nobleman of Malaga, whom misfortunes had obliged to recur to his musical knowledge for subsistence, he began by losing his senses, and ended by talking nonsense in order to justify his pretensions. When that was done, he came to the resolution of demanding me in marriage, but had not courage enough to make his declaration in person. The friend whom he empowered to do so, not being able by his remonstrances to divert him from his intention, executed his commission. The consequence was, a request not to set his foot within the house again, accompanied with those civilities which are due to the unfortunate. My father's jokes made me ac-

\* The word *Mignard* means in French a delicate little gentleman. — *Transf.*

quainted with what had passed : he was fond of entertaining me with a relation of the applications made to him on my account ; and as he was a little proud of his advantages, he did not spare the persons who laid themselves open to ridicule.

Poor Mozon was become a widower ; he had the wen that embellished his left cheek extirpated ; and had some thoughts of setting up a one-horse chaise : I was then fifteen, and he had been sent for to perfect me in my dancing. His imagination took fire ; he entertained a high opinion of his art ; he should have thought it no presumption in Marcel \* ; one dancing-master was as good as another, why then should he not enter the lists ? He made known his wishes, and was dismissed like Mignard.

From the moment a young female attains the age that announces maturity, swarms of suitors come humming round her, like bees about the newly-expanded flower.

Brought up in the strictest manner, and leading so retired a life, I could inspire but one project ; but the respectable character of my mother, the appearance of some fortune, and my being an only child, might make that project a tempting one to a great number of persons.

Accordingly they came in crowds ; and finding it difficult to obtain a personal introduction, the greater part adopted the expedient of writing to my

\* A very celebrated French dancing-master.

parents. All letters of this kind were brought to me by my father ; and my first opinion was always grounded upon the terms in which they were conceived, without the least regard to the statement they contained of the writer's rank and fortune. I undertook to make a rough draught of the answers, which my father faithfully transcribed. I made him dismiss my suitors with dignity, without giving room for resentment or for hope. The youth of our quarter passed thus in review ; and in the greater number of instances I met with no difficulty in getting my refusal approved. My father looked to little else than riches ; and, as he thought himself authorized to expect great things, whoever was too recently established, or whose actual possessions or speedy hopes of property did not insure considerable ease of circumstances, was sure not to obtain his vote ; but when once those requisites were found, he was concerned at seeing me refuse to close with the proposal. Here began to break out those dissensions between my father and me, which continued ever after. He loved and esteemed commerce, because he regarded it as the source of riches ; I detested and despised it, because I considered it as the foundation for avarice and fraud.

My father was sensible that I could not accept of an artisan, properly so called ; his vanity would not have suffered him to entertain such an idea : but he could not conceive that the elegant jeweller, who



touches nothing but fine things, from which he derives a great profit, was not a suitable match, especially when already in good business, and in a fair way to make a fortune. But the spirit of the jeweller, as well as of the little mercer, whom he looks upon as beneath him, and of the rich woollen-draper, who holds himself superior to both, appeared to me entirely engrossed by the lust of gold, and by mercenary calculations and contrivances: the mind of such a man must needs be a stranger to the elevated ideas and refined sentiments by which I appreciated existence.

Occupied from my infancy in considering the relations of man in society, brought up in the strictest morality, and familiarized with the noblest examples, had I then lived with Plutarch, and all the other philosophers, to no better purpose than to connect myself for life with a shop-keeper incapable of seeing any thing in the same light as myself?

I have already said that my provident mother wished me to be as much at home in the kitchen as in the drawing-room, and at market as in a public walk: after my return from the convent, I used still to accompany her, when she went to purchase articles of household consumption, as was often the case; and at last she would sometimes send me on such errands with a maid. The butcher with whom she dealt lost a second wife, and found himself, while still in the prime of life, possessed of a fortune of fifty thousand crowns, which he proposed to



to augment. I was perfectly ignorant of these particulars: I only perceived that I was well served, and with abundant civility; and was much surpris'd at seeing this personage frequently appear on a Sunday in a handsome suit of black and lace ruffles in the same walk as ourselves, and put himself in my mother's way, to whom he made a low bow, without accosting her. This practice continued a whole summer. I fell sick; and every morning the butcher sent to inquire what we wanted, and to offer any accommodation in his power. This very pointed attention began to provoke my father's smiles, who, wishing to divert himself, introduced to me a certain Mademoiselle Michon, a grave church-going woman, one day when she came very ceremoniously to demand my hand in the butcher's name. 'You know, daughter,' said he, with great gravity, 'that it is a rule with me to lay no constraint upon your inclinations.—I shall therefore only state to you a proposal in which you are principally concerned. He then repeated what Mademoiselle Michon had intimated. I screwed up my mouth, a little vexed that my father's good-humour should turn over to me the task of giving an answer, which he ought to have taken upon himself. 'You know, papa,' said I, parodying his mode of expression, 'that I consider myself as very happy in my present situation; and that I am firmly resolved not to quit it for some years to come. You may take any steps in conformity with this

resolution that you think proper:’ and on saying this I withdrew.—‘ Why truly,’ said my father, when we were afterwards alone, ‘ this reason you have invented is a very fine one for keeping every body away.’—‘ I revenged myself, papa, for the little trick you played me, by a general answer very becoming a girl; and I left it to you to give a formal refusal: a task which I ought not to take upon myself.’—‘ It’s an excellent evasion; but tell me then who it is that will suit you?’—‘ Tell me, papa, why, in bringing me up, you taught me to think, and suffered me to contract habits of study: I know not what kind of man I shall marry; but it must be one who can share my sentiments, and to whom I can communicate my thoughts.’—‘ There are men in business possessed both of politeness and information.’—‘ Yes, but not of the kind I want: their politeness consists in a few phrases and bows, and their knowledge always relates to the strong box, and would assist me but little in the education of my children.’—‘ But you might educate them yourself.’—‘ The task would appear laborious, if not shared by the man to whom they would owe their existence.’—‘ Do you suppose that *l’Empereur’s* wife is not happy? They have just retired from business, are buying capital places, keep an excellent house, and receive the best company.’—‘ I am no judge of other people’s happiness; but my own affections are not fixed upon riches: I conceive that the strictest union

union of hearts is requisite to conjugal felicity ; nor can I connect myself with a man who does not resemble me : my husband must even be my superior, for since both nature and the laws give him pre-eminence, I should be ashamed of him, if he did not really deserve it.'—' You want a counsellor, I suppose ? But women are not very happy with those learned gentlemen : they have a great deal of pride, and very little money.'—' My God ! papa, I do not judge of a man's merit by his cloth ; nor have I ever told you that I affect such or such a profession : I want a man I can love.'—' But according to you, such a man is not to be found in trade ?'—' I confess that I do not think it likely. I have never seen a tradesman to my liking ; and the profession itself is my aversion.'—' It is, however, a very pleasant thing for a woman to sit at her ease in her own apartment, while her husband is carrying on a lucrative trade. Now, there's Madam d'Argens : she understands diamonds as well as her husband : she deals with the brokers in his absence ; concludes bargains with private persons, and would be able to carry on the business, even if left a widow : their fortune is already considerable, and they belong to the company which has just bought Bagnolet. You are intelligent ; and, indeed, understand that branch of business since you perused the treatise on precious stones. You would inspire people with confidence ; you might do whatever  
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you please; and a happy life would you have had if you could but have fancied Delorme, Dabréuil, or l'Obligéois.'—'Hark ye, papa; I have too well perceived that the only way to make a fortune in trade, is by selling dear what has been bought cheap, by overcharging the customer, and beating down the poor workman. I should never be able to descend to such practices, nor to respect a man who makes them his occupation from morning to night. It is my wish to be a virtuous wife; but how should I be faithful to a man who would hold no place in my esteem, even admitting the possibility of my marrying such a man? Selling diamonds and selling pastry seem nearly the same thing to me; except that the latter has a fixed price, requires less deceit perhaps, but soils the fingers more. I like the one not in any degree better than the other.'—'Do you suppose then there are no honest tradesmen?'—'I will not absolutely affirm it; but I am persuaded the number is small; and the few honest folks have not all that I require in a husband.'—'You are extremely fastidious, methinks; but if you do not find the idol of your imagination?'—'I will die a maid.'—'That would be a harder task perhaps, than you imagine. You have time enough, to be sure, to think of it: but *ennui* will come at last; the crowd will be gone by; and you know the fable!'—'Oh! I would take my revenge by deserving happiness from the very injustice that  
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would deprive me of it.'—'Now you are in the clouds again! It is very pleasant to soar to such a height; but it is not easy to keep the elevation: do not forget, however, that I should like to have grandchildren before I am too far advanced in years.'

I should like to present you with some, said I to myself, when my father put an end to the dialogue, by withdrawing; but most certainly I never shall have any, unless by a husband to my mind. I experienced a slight sensation of melancholy, when on casting my eyes about me, I could perceive nothing that was suitable to my taste; but the sensation soon subsided. I was sensible of my present comforts, and hope threw its enlivening beams on the time to come. It was the plenitude of happiness overflowing its banks, and clearing away every thing unpleasant from my future prospect.

'Shall I suit you this time, Mademoiselle?' said my father one day, with affected gravity, and the look of satisfaction which was visible upon every new demand. 'Read that letter.' It was very well written as to imagery and style, and brought the blood into my cheeks. Mr. Morizot de Rozain expressed himself handsomely enough, but did not forget to remark that his name was to be found among the nobles of his province. It appeared to me coxcomical and injudicious, to make a parade of an advantage which he knew me not to possess, and of which he had no right to suppose me ambitious. 'We have here,' said I, shaking my



my head, 'no great cause for consideration: it may be worth while, however, to hear what the gentleman has to say for himself: a letter or two more, and I shall be able to sound the depth of his pretensions. I will go and draw up an answer.' When writing was the question, my father was as tractable as a child, and sat down to copy without reluctance. I was much diverted at the idea of acting the papa; and discussed my own interests with all the gravity suitable to the occasion, and in a style of prudence truly parental. No less than three explanatory letters came from Mr. de Rozain, which I preserved for a long time, because they were extremely well written. They proved to me that powers of mind did not suffice, unless accompanied by superior judgment, and a soul, which nothing can supply the want of, or describe, but which is recognized at the first glance. Besides, Rozain had nothing but the title of advocate; my present fortune was not enough for two; nor were his qualities such as to create a desire of surmounting that obstacle.

In announcing the *rising en masse* of my suitors, I did not promise to name them all, and I shall be readily excused. I only wish to show the singularity of a situation, which procured me offers from a great many persons, whose very faces I was not always acquainted with, and in which the examination of reasons and appearances was left to myself. I often, indeed, perceived new faces ob-  
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serving or following me at church, or in the public walks, and used to say to myself, 'I shall soon have an answer to write for my father.' But I never saw a figure that surprised or fascinated me.

I have already said that La Blancherie had wit enough to make his way into our house, and to understand, that, before he declared himself, it was necessary to gain my good opinion. Though still very young, he had already travelled, had read a great deal, and had even tried his fortune as an author. His work was not good for much; but it contained morality in abundance, and some ideas that were not amiss. He had intitled it, *Abstract of my Travels, intended to serve as a School for Fathers and Mothers*: this, as my readers will perceive, was not very modest; but one could hardly help forgiving him; for he supported himself by very respectable philosophical authorities, quoted them happily, and inveighed with all the indignation of an honest heart, against the coldness and negligence of parents, too frequently the cause of the destructive irregularities of youth. La Blancherie, diminutive, brown, and ordinary, had no hold on my imagination; but I did not dislike his mind, and thought I could perceive that he had a great liking for my person. One evening, returning with my mother from a visit to our old relations, we found my father in a thoughtful mood. 'I have news for you,' said he, smiling. 'La Blancherie is just gone away, after passing more than  
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than two hours with me; he has told me a secret; and as it concerns you, Mademoiselle, you must be let into it.' (The consequence was not strictly necessary, but it was customary with my father to infer it.) 'He is in love with her, and has proposed himself for my son-in-law; but he has no fortune, and it would be a folly, as I have given him to understand. He is preparing for the bar, and means to purchase a place in the magistracy; but what he has to expect from his family, being too little for the purpose, he has been thinking, that if we like the match, his wife's fortune would supply the deficiency, and that as our girl is an only child, they might live with us for the first two or three years. He has been saying a great number of fine things upon the subject, which may be very satisfactory to a youthful fancy; but prudent parents require something more solid. Let him set up an office, or buy a place; let him, in short, follow his profession: it will be time enough to talk of marriage afterwards; but to begin by marrying, would be absurd in the extreme. Besides, it would be necessary to inquire into his character; though that indeed might be easily done. I had rather he were not noble, and that he had forty thousand good crowns in his purse. He is a good young man; we had a great deal of talk together; and though he was a little hurt by my arguments, he listened to me with patience. At last he requested me not to shut my door

door against him, and urged his prayer with so good a grace, that I consented, upon condition of his not coming more frequently than before. I told him that I would not say a word to you; but as I know your discretion, I never like to keep you in the dark.'—A few questions from my mother, and some prudent reflections concerning the many things to be considered before we form an affection, saved me the trouble of answering; but my thoughts were busily employed.

Though my father's calculations were well founded, there was nothing unreasonable in the young man's proposal; and I felt disposed to see him, and to study his disposition with additional interest and curiosity. My opportunities were few: at the end of some months La Blancherie set off for Orleans, and I saw no more of him till two years after. In the mean time I was very near marrying Gardanne, the physician; a match recommended by one of our relations. Madam Desportes, a native of Provence, had married a tradesman at Paris; and having been left a widow with an only daughter, at a very early age, had continued to deal in jewels, the business which my father thought so very agreeable. Sound sense, civility, good breeding, and a great deal of address, procured her general esteem: any one, indeed, would have supposed that she carried on her trade merely to oblige her customers. Without going out of her apartment, which was neatly furnished,



nished, and in which she received a very respectable society, composed in part of the very persons who satisfied their wants or their luxury by purchasing her goods, she maintained herself in easy circumstances, without increasing or diminishing the little fortune she possessed. Being far advanced in years, she needed the assistance of her daughter, who, out of filial affection, rejected all offers of marriage, that her intimate union with her mother might not be disturbed.

Gardanne was a countryman of Madam Desportes. Natural good sense, that lively disposition so common among the natives of the south, an excellent education, and an extreme desire to get on, promised the young doctor success in a career, already auspiciously begun. Madam Desportes, who received him with that patronizing kindness which became her age and character, and which she had the art of rendering agreeable, conceived the idea of giving him her young cousin for a wife; but death overtook her while intent upon this project, which her daughter resolved to execute.

Gardanne both desired and feared the connection. In considering the advantages and inconveniences of becoming a *Benedict*, he did not, like my romantic brain, attend to personal qualities alone: he calculated every thing. My fortune was only twenty thousand livres\*; but the smallness of

\* 883l.



this sum was compensated by considerable expectations. The pecuniary arrangements were made before I knew any thing of the matter, and the *bargain* absolutely concluded, when I first heard that a physician had entered the lists. The profession did not displease me ; it promised an enlightened mind : but it was necessary to become acquainted with his person. A walk in the Luxemburg gardens was proposed ; we were to be overtaken by the rain ; and the rain came, or at least was apprehended. We ran for shelter to the house of a Mademoiselle de la Barre, a rigid Jansenist, and a friend of Madam Desportes, who was overjoyed at the circumstance, and offered us refreshments, which we were taking, when her physician came with his countrywoman in the very moment to pay her a visit.

A minute survey took place on both sides, without any appearance, on my part, of being so employed, but at the same time without my suffering any thing to escape me. My cousin assumed an air of triumph, as if she would have said, ‘ I did not tell you she was handsome : but what do you think of her ? ’ My good mother looked kind and pensive ; Mademoiselle de la Barre was equally profuse of her wit and her confectionary ; the physician chattered away, and made great havoc among the sugar-plums, saying, with a sort of gallantry, that favoured a little of the school-boy, that he was very fond of every thing sweet ; upon which the

young lady observed with a soft voice, a blush, and a half smile, that the men were accused of loving sweet things, because it was necessary to make use of great sweetness in dealing with them. The cunning doctor was quite tickled with the epigram. My father would willingly have given us his benediction, and was so polite, that I was out of all patience with him. The doctor retired first to pay his evening visits; we returned as we came; and this was called an *interview*. Mademoiselle Desportes, a strict observer of punctilios, had so ordered it, because forsooth a man who has views of marriage ought never to set his foot in a private house, where there is a daughter, until his proposals are accepted; but when once that is done, the marriage articles are directly to be drawn up, and the consummation is to follow immediately. This is the law and the prophets. A physician in the habiliments of his profession, is never a pleasing object to a young woman; nor could I indeed, at any period of life, figure to myself such a thing as love in a periwig. Gardanne with his three tails, his physical look, his southern accent, and his black eye-brows, seemed much more likely to allay than to excite a fever. But this I felt without making the reflection: my ideas of marriage were so serious, that I could not perceive any thing laughable in his proposals.—‘Well,’ said my good mother to me, in a tone of tender inquiry, ‘what think you of this man? Will he suit you?’—‘My dear mamma, it is impossible

possible yet for me to tell.'—'But you can certainly tell whether he has inspired you with dislike.'—'Neither dislike nor inclination: which of the two may come hereafter, I cannot say.'—'We ought to know however what answer to give in case a proposal should be made in form.'—'Is the answer to be binding?'—'Assuredly, if we pass our word to a decent man, we must adhere to it.'—'And if I should not like him?'—'A reasonable young woman, not actuated by caprice, after having once maturely weighed the motives that determine her in so important a resolution, will never change her mind.'—'I am to decide then upon the strength of a single interview.'—'Not exactly that; the intimacy of M. de Gardanne with our family enables us to judge of his conduct and way of life, and by means of a little inquiry we shall easily come at a knowledge of his disposition. These are the principal points to found a determination upon: the sight of the person is a matter of much less moment.'—'Ah mamma! I am in no haste to be married.'—'I believe it, daughter; but you must settle yourself in the world some time or other; and you have now attained the proper age. You have refused many offers from tradesmen; and they are the people from whom your situation makes offers the most likely to come: you seem determined never to marry a man in business: the match at present in question is suitable in every external point of view.—Take care then not to

reject it too lightly.'—'It appears to me there is time enough to think about it; M. Gardanne has, perhaps, made no decision himself; for it is certain that he never saw me before.'—  
 'True; but if that be your only excuse, it is possible it may not be of long duration: I do not, however, require an immediate answer. Revolve the matter in your mind, and two days hence let me know what you think about it.' On saying this, my mother kissed my forehead, and withdrew.

Reason and nature concur so well in persuading a prudent and modest young woman that she ought to marry, that all deliberation upon the subject is necessarily confined to the choice of a mate. Now, as to this choice, the arguments of my mother were by no means destitute of force. I considered, besides, that my provisional acceptance, however it might be construed, could never amount to a positive engagement; and that it would be absurd to suppose me under contract, because I might consent to see the person proposed at my father's house. I was sensible too, if I should dislike him, no consideration upon earth could induce me to accept his hand. I determined then, within myself, not to say no, but to wait till we should become better acquainted.

We were just on the point of setting off for the country, where we were to pass a fortnight. I thought it would be improper to delay our journey in expectation of a suitor, and my mother was  
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of the same opinion ; but when we were on the eve of our departure, Mademoiselle de la Barre came in great form to demand my hand in the doctor's name. My parents answered in the general terms that people employ when they wish it to be understood that their consent will depend upon further consideration. Permission, however, was asked, and granted, for the lover to pay his respects in person. Mademoiselle Desportes, with her usual formality, concluded it was her business to be his conductor ; and a family collation, at which Mademoiselle de la Barre and one of my female relations were present, served to celebrate the gentleman's ceremonious entry into my father's house. The next day we set off for the country, on purpose to pass there the precise time necessary for inquiries. The second interview made no greater impression upon me than the first ; but I thought I could perceive that Gardanne was a sensible man, with whom a rational woman might live upon good terms ; and, like an unexperienced girl, I concluded that when once it was possible to reason and understand one another, a sufficient provision was made for matrimonial bliss.

My mother was afraid that he showed signs of an imperious disposition ; an idea that never came into my mind : accustomed to watch over myself, to regulate my affections, and to keep my imagination within bounds, and impressed with a strong sense of the rigour and sublimity of the duties of a

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wife, I could not understand what difference a disposition, a little more or a little less indulgent, could make to me, nor what more could be required of me than I required of myself: I reasoned like a philosopher who calculates, or like a recluse equally a stranger to the passions, and to mankind. I took my tranquil, affectionate, generous, and candid heart, as a common measure of the moral qualities of my species. I continued a long while to be guilty of that fault. It was the only source of my errors. I hasten to point it out: it is giving beforehand the key of my scrutoire. I carried with me into the country a sort of inquietude: it was not that gentle agitation with which the beauties of nature usually inspired me, and which rendered its charms still more grateful to my feelings. I found myself upon the eve of a new existence: I was going, perhaps, to quit my excellent mother, my darling studies, my beloved retirement, and a sort of independence, for a state which I could not well define, and which would impose on me the most important obligations. I thought it an honour to have them to discharge, and was proud of being able to undertake them; but the prospect was clouded, and I experienced all the hopes and fears of incertitude. Mademoiselle Desportes had made me promise to write to her; and I kept my word: but, at the end of a fortnight, I heard she was very much afflicted. My father, who did every thing by rule, would never have believed that

that he had married his daughter properly, and fulfilled the duty of a parent, if he had not made his customary inquiries in due form. Gardanne had been introduced by one of our relations, who knew his family, and was intimate with himself. All possible information had been afforded, but it did not signify; my father had written to three or four persons in Provence, at the very beginning of the business, to inquire into the most minute particulars of the doctor's family and habits. During our absence, his vigilance did not even stop there: he employed a variety of little manœuvres, in order to learn from servants and tradesmen, the temper and way of life of his future son-in-law. Nor was that all; he went to pay him a visit; and, with an address equal to that which he had made use of in his inquiries, when he let every body see why he was making them, he affected to be very well informed. He mentioned to Gardanne in an awkward way, and as a man whom he ought to respect, one of his countrymen with whom he was at variance, and added premature advice to his remarks in the authoritative tone of a father. Gardanne received at one and the same time, letters from the country, rallying him upon the inquiries to which he gave occasion, intelligence of the inquiry carrying on concerning his private affairs, and the pedagogical exhortation of his intended father-in-law. Distressed, vexed, and irritated, he

went to Mademoiselle Desportes, and complained with all the warmth of a native of the south, of the strange conduct of a man, whose amiable daughter had no other fault than that of having so singular a father. Mademoiselle Desportes, fiery, as well as himself, and full of pride, was much displeased at his being so little in love with her cousin as to complain of trifles like these, and gave him a very indifferent reception. The very moment these circumstances came to my knowledge, I eagerly embraced the opportunity of putting an end to my incertitude; and wrote to say, that, on my return, I hoped to see no more of my physical suitor. Such was the *denouement* of a marriage which it was intended to hurry on with so much speed, that Gardanne expected to conclude the business in a week after my return. I congratulated myself on escaping ties, that my friends would fain have drawn closely in so sudden a manner; my mother, alarmed at the doctor's warmth of temper, felt as if delivered from some dreadful danger, though grieving a little on other accounts; my father endeavoured to conceal his shame and disappointment under the veil of lordly dignity; and my cousin preserved hers by forbidding the doctor to set his foot in her house. Five years after, Mademoiselle de la Barre told her, that this marriage was written in heaven; that her friend kept himself free from all other engagements;

ments; and that the hand of Providence was preparing to bring us together, by means inscrutable to human eyes.

What an excellent prophecy! It was as good as Ninon's billet to the Marquis de la Châstre.

My mother's health began insensibly to decline. She had had a stroke of the palsy, which was represented to me as the rheumatism, a pious fraud, in which, without flattering herself, she willingly joined, in order to prevent my taking any alarm. Serious and taciturn, she every day lost a portion of her vivacity; was fond of secluding herself from the world; and obliged me, sometimes, to go out with the maid, refusing to quit her apartment. She often talked of my changing my condition, and lamented I could not prevail on myself to close with any of the offers that were made me. One day in particular, she urged me, with melancholy earnestness, to accept an honest jeweller who had demanded my hand: 'He has in his favour,' said she, 'great reputation for integrity, habits of sobriety, and mildness of disposition, with an easy fortune, which may become brilliant; and that circumstance makes part of the merit of a man, who is not remarkable for his personal advantages. He knows that yours is not a common mind, professes great esteem for you, will be proud of following your advice, and says already, that he would not object to his wife's suckling her children. You might lead him

him any way you like.'—'Why, mamma, I do not want a husband who is to be led; he would be too cumbersome a child for me.'—'Do you know that you are a very whimsical girl? for after all you would not like a master.'—'My dear mother, let us understand one another: I should not like a man to give himself airs of authority: he would only teach me to resist; but at the same time, I should not like a husband whom it would be necessary to govern. Either I am much mistaken, or those beings five foot and a half high, with beards upon their chins, seldom fail to make us perceive that they are the stronger. Now if the good man should think proper to remind me of that superiority, he would provoke me; and if he should submit to be governed, I should be ashamed of my own power.'—'I understand you; you would like a man to think himself the master, while obeying you in every thing.'—'No, it is not that either: I hate servitude, but I do not think myself made for empire; it would only embarrass me; my reason finds it quite enough to take care of myself. I should wish to gain the affections of a man so completely worthy of my esteem, that I might be proud of my complaisance; of a man who would make his happiness consist in contributing to mine, in the way that his good sense and affection might think meet.'—'Happiness, daughter, does not always consist in that perfect conformity of ideas and affections which you imagine;  
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if without that it could not exist, there would be hardly any such thing as a happy couple.'—'Neither do I know any whose happiness I envy.'—'Perhaps so; but still among those matches you do not envy, there may be many preferable to always living single. I may be called out of the world sooner than you imagine; you would remain with your father; he is still young, and you cannot imagine all the disagreeable things that my fondness for you makes me fear. How happy should I be, if I could but leave you united to an honest man, when I depart from this world.' These last ideas afflicted me beyond measure: my mother seemed to lift up the veil that concealed a sad and dreadful futurity, which I did not even apprehend. I had never thought of losing her; and the mere idea of such an event, which she spoke of as approaching, struck me with terror; a cold shivering seized my whole frame; I gazed upon her with wild and eager eyes, from which her smiles drew forth a flood of tears. 'What! you are alarmed? as if, in taking our resolutions, we ought not to calculate all possible chances. I am not ill, though at a critical time of life, of which the revolutions frequently prove fatal; but it is in health that we ought to provide against sickness, and the present occasion makes it peculiarly necessary. An honest and worthy man offers you his hand; you are turned of twenty, and will no longer see so many suitors as have tendered you their  
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homage during the last five years. I may be snatched away—do not then reject a husband, who has not, it is true, the delicacy on which you set so great a value (a quality very rare, even where we look for it the most); but he is a man who will love you, and with whom you may be happy.’—‘Yes, mamma,’ cried I with a deep sigh, ‘happy as you have been!’ My mother was disconcerted, and made me no reply, nor from that moment did she ever open her lips to me about that or any other match, at least in a pressing manner. The remark had escaped me, as the expression of an acute feeling escapes us when we have not taken time to reflect: the effect it produced convinced me that it was too true.

A stranger might have perceived at the first glance the great difference between my father and mother: but who could feel like me all the excellence of the latter? I had not, however, fully calculated all she must have had to suffer. Accustomed from my infancy to see the most profound peace prevail in the house, I could not judge of the painful efforts it might cost to maintain it. My father loved his wife, and was tenderly fond of me. Never—I will not say a reproach—but never did even a look of discontent break in upon the good humour of my mother. When she was not of her husband’s opinion, and could not prevail upon him to modify it, she appeared to pass sentence upon her own without the smallest reluctance.

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It was only during the latter years of her life, that, feeling myself hurt by my father's mode of reasoning, I sometimes took the liberty to interfere in the discussion: by degrees I gained a certain sort of ascendance, and availed myself of it with considerable freedom. Whether it was the novelty of my enterprize that confounded him, or whether it was weakness, I know not, but my father yielded to me more readily than to his wife; I always exerted my influence in her defence; and might not unaptly have been termed my mother's watch-dog. It was no longer safe to molest her in my presence—either by barking, or by pulling the skirt of the coat, or by shewing my teeth in good earnest, I was sure to make the assailant let go his hold. It is worthy of remark, that, being no less reserved than my mother in regard to her husband, I never said a word to her in private, and out of his hearing, that was not consistent with filial respect. I employed in her defence the force, I will say even the authority of reason, when address did not suffice; but when we were alone I should not have dared to utter a word relative to what had passed. For her sake I could enter the lists even against her husband; but that husband, when absent, was no longer any thing but my father, about whom we were both silent, unless when any thing could be said in his praise. I could perceive however, that he had lost by degrees his habits of industry. Parish business having first called him from home; sauntering abroad afterwards

wards became a passion. All public spectacles, and every thing that was passing out of doors, attracted his attention; a passion for gaming next laid hold of him; connexions made at the coffee-house led him elsewhere; and the lottery held out temptations which he could not resist. The desire of making a fortune having engaged him in speculations, quite foreign to his profession, and not always successful, that desire, when once he had lost his assiduity, made him set every thing at hazard. In proportion as his art was less exercised, his talents diminished; and by leading a less regular life, he impaired his faculties: his sight grew weak, and his hand lost its steadiness. His pupils being less superintended by their master, became less able to supply his place; and it was soon found necessary to diminish their number, because the tide of business necessarily flowed elsewhere. Those changes took place by insensible degrees, and their effect became very perceptible, before any one had calculated all its consequences. My mother grew pensive, and began now and then to give me imperfect intimations of her uneasiness, which I was fearful of increasing by speaking of what neither she nor I could prevent. I was careful to procure her every satisfaction that depended upon me; and as she was grown averse to walking, I sometimes consented to leave her, in order to go abroad with my father, whom I requested to take me out for a walk. He no longer sought to have me with him as formerly; but he still took a pleasure

pleasure in attending me, and I used to bring him back in a sort of triumph to that excellent mother whose tender emotions I could easily perceive whenever she saw us together. We were not always gainers by it ; for my father, that he might neither refuse his daughter, nor be disappointed of his pleasures, would first see me safe home, and then go out again, for an instant, as he said ; but instead of returning to supper, he would forget the hour, and not come home till midnight. In the mean time we had been weeping in silence ; and if it happened to me, on his return, to represent to him our chagrin, he treated the matter lightly, parrying my gentle reproaches by raillery, or else retired in the silence of discontent. Our domestic happiness was buried beneath these clouds ; but the peace of the family remained unaltered, so that an indifferent spectator would not have perceived the changes that were daily taking place.

My mother had suffered considerably, for more than a year, from a kind of obstruction in the respiratory passages, which resembled a cold in the head, but of which her physicians were totally unable to imagine the cause. After various remedies, they recommended exercise, which she was no longer fond of, and country air. That was just before Whitsuntide of the year 1775, and it was agreed that we should pass the holydays at Meudon. On the Sunday morning I did not wake, as I was accustomed to do when any of those rural excursions



curfions were in agitation : I was overcome by broken and uneasy sleep, and tormented by ill-omened dreams. I thought we were returning to Paris by water, in the midst of a storm ; and upon getting out of the boat, a corpse that was dragging ashore impeded my way. I was terrified at the sight, and was endeavouring to find out whose body it could be.—At that very instant, my mother, laying her hand lightly upon my legs, and calling me with her soft voice, put an end to my dream. I was as much rejoiced at seeing her, as if she had saved me from the most imminent danger ; I stretched out my arms, and embraced her with emotion, telling her she had done me great kindness by waking me. I got up ; we made our arrangements, and set off. The weather was fine, the air calm, a little boat conveyed us speedily to the place of our destination, and the charms of the country restored my serenity. My mother was the better for the journey ; and resumed a portion of her activity. It was on the second day we discovered Ville-bonne, and the water-bailiff of the Moulin Rouge. I had promised my Agatha to call upon her the day after the holydays ; we returned on Tuesday evening ; and my mother purposed accompanying me to the convent ; but being a little fatigued with the exercise of the preceding days, she changed her mind at the moment I was setting off, and desired the maid to accompany me. I then wished to stay at home ; but she insisted on my

keeping

keeping my word; adding, that I well knew she had no objection to being alone, and that if desirous of taking a turn in the *Jardin du Roi*; I was free so to do.

My visit to Agatha was a short one: ‘Why are you in such haste?’ said she; ‘does any one expect you?’—‘No; but I am anxious to return to my mother.’—‘Why, you told me she was well.’—‘I did so; nor does she expect me so soon; but I know not what it is that torments me: I shall not be easy till I see her again.’ On saying this, I felt my heart swell, as it were, in spite of me.

It may, perhaps, be supposed these circumstances are added by the reflection of a sentiment, which lends its colour to preceding incidents.—I am no more than a faithful historian, and relate facts, which the event alone afterwards recalled to my mind.

It must certainly have appeared from the exposition of my opinions, and still more from the successive developement of the ideas I had acquired, that I was at that time no more infected with certain prejudices, than I am now with superstition. Accordingly, in reflecting upon what are called *presentiments*, I have often thought they are nothing more than rapid glances caught by persons of quick perception and exquisite feelings, of a multitude of things which are scarcely perceptible, which cannot even be described, which are rather felt than understood, and from which an affection results that

is not to be accounted for, although it is afterwards justified by the event.

The more lively the interest any object inspires, the stronger is our perception or sensibility in regard to that object, and the more we have of those physical notices, if I may be allowed the expression, which are afterwards called presentiments, and which the ancients considered as auguries, or intimations given by the gods.

My mother was to me the dearest object upon earth: she was drawing near her end, without any external sign that might serve to announce it to common observers: nor had my attention yet distinguished any thing that clearly indicated so dreadful a blow; but doubtless some slight alterations must have taken place in her, by which I was agitated without knowing why: I could not say that I was uneasy, because I should not have known why; but my mind was not at peace; my heart frequently sunk within me while looking at her; and whenever I left her I experienced a disagreeable feeling that made me impatient to return. When I was taking leave of Agatha there was something so singular in my manner, that she begged me to let her hear from me immediately. I hurried home notwithstanding the observations of the maid, who was of opinion that a walk in the *Jardin du Roi* would be very pleasant at that time of day. I came to the house, and found a little girl of the neighbourhood standing at the door:—‘Ah! Mademoiselle,’

moiselle,' exclaimed she, on seeing me, 'your mamma is taken very ill; she has been for my mother, who is gone up stairs with her to her apartment.' Struck with affright, I uttered a few inarticulate sounds: I ran, I flew into the room; and there I found my mother in an armed-chair, with her head fallen on her shoulder, her eyes wild, her mouth open, and her arms hanging down. On seeing me her countenance brightened; she endeavoured to speak, but her tongue could with difficulty utter a few half-formed words: she wished to say, that she was waiting for me with impatience; she made an effort to raise her arms; one only obeyed the impulse of her will; she laid her hand on my face, wiped away the tears that bedewed it with her fingers; tapped me gently on the cheek, as if to comfort me; an effort to smile appeared in her countenance; she tried to speak:—vain efforts! the palsy tied her tongue, sunk her head, and annihilated half her body. Neither Hungary water, nor salt put into her mouth, nor friction, produced any effect. In an instant I had dispatched messengers for my father, and the physician; I had darted like lightning myself to fetch two grains of tartar emetic from the next apothecary's. The physician came; my mother was put into bed; and medicines were administered: the disorder notwithstanding made a dreadful progress. Her eyes were closed; her head, sunk upon her chest, could no longer support itself; and her short and convul-

five breathing indicated a general oppression of the whole body. She heard however what was said, and, when asked if she felt much pain, pointed out the seat of her sufferings by putting her left hand to her forehead. I was inexpressibly active; I ordered every thing, and had always done it myself before it could be done by any other person: I appeared not to quit her bed side, and yet I prepared for her every thing she wanted. About ten o'clock in the evening I saw the physician take my father and two or three women aside; I begged to know what he had proposed; and was told that they had sent for the extreme unction:—I thought it was all a dream. The priest came, began to pray, and performed a ceremony I did not understand, while I held a light to him, in obedience to a mere mechanical impulse. Standing at the foot of the bed without answering, or giving way to those who wished to take my place, with my eyes fixed on my adored and dying mother, and entirely occupied by a single sentiment, which at length suspended all my faculties, I let the candle drop out of my hand, and fell senseless on the floor. I was carried off, and found myself, some time afterwards in the parlour adjoining to my bed-chamber, surrounded by the family. I turned my eyes towards, the door; I rose from my seat; and finding myself held back, made suppliant gestures to obtain permission to return. A solemn silence, and a mournful but constant opposition, counteracted my desire. I regained my strength; I begged; I insisted;



lifted; but they were inexorable; and I broke out into a sort of rage. At that instant my father walked into the room, pale and speechless with grief; and answered to the silent inquiry that every one seemed to make, by a look which drew forth a general exclamation of sorrow. The consternation of those around me gave me an opportunity of getting away; I rushed forth impetuously: my mother—she was no more! I lifted up her arms; I could not believe it: I opened and closed alternately those eyes that were never to see me again, and that were wont to rivet themselves upon me with such endearing tenderness: I called her; I threw myself upon her bed in a transport of grief; I pressed my lips to hers; I separated them; I endeavoured to inhale death: I hoped to draw it in with my breath, and instantly to expire. I know not well what followed; I only remember, that towards the morning I found myself at a neighbour's, whither M. Bernard came, who had me put into a carriage, and conveyed me to his house. We alighted; my great aunt embraced me in silence; set me down at a little table; offered me something to drink, and entreated me to take it. I tried to gratify her, and fainted away. They put me to bed, and there I passed a fortnight, between life and death, in the most dreadful convulsions. The physical sensation, which I remember, was that of a continual suffocation; and my respiration, as I was afterwards told, was a kind of howling, that was heard  
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in the street: I had suffered a revolution, which my situation rendered still more critical, and from which I was only saved by a strong constitution, and by the boundless attentions that were lavished on me. My respectable relations removed their beds into little closets, to afford me a more comfortable lodging: they seemed to have assumed new vigour, in order to redeem me from the grave; and would not permit any thing to be offered me by a mercenary hand. They insisted upon waiting on me themselves, and would only consent to be assisted by my cousin, a young woman of the name of Trude, who came every evening to pass the night with me, lying in the same bed, and careful to anticipate and relieve the fits of convulsion with which I was frequently seized.

Eight days had elapsed, and I had not shed a tear: great sorrows, alas! are not relieved so easily.—(The scalding drops, at this moment, are streaming down my cheeks; for I dread an evil still greater than what I suffer. All my hopes and wishes were centred in the safety of what I love; and its fate is become more uncertain than ever! Calamities spreading like a dark and dreadful cloud, are ready to envelope all that was dear to me; and I labour, with difficulty and pain, to divert my attention from the present, by obliging myself to retrace the past.)—

An epistle from Sophy came to open the source of my tears; the soothing voice and tender expressions of friendship recalled my faculties, and spoke con-

consolation to my heart. They produced an effect, which the warm bath, and the medical art, had courted in vain: a new revolution took place; I wept, and was saved. The suffocation diminished; all the dangerous symptoms abated, and the convulsions became less frequent; but every painful impression was sure to bring on a fit.

My father presented himself to me in the sad apparel, that testified a loss, common to us both, but unequally felt: he undertook to console me, by representing, that Providence disposed every thing for the best, even in our calamities; that my mother had fulfilled the task assigned her in this world, the education of her child; and that, since heaven had decreed I should lose one of my parents, it was better the one should remain who could be most useful to my fortune. My loss was certainly irreparable, even in that respect, as the event fully proved; but I did not then make the reflection: I only felt the inefficiency of this pretended consolation, so little adapted to my way of thinking; and measured, perhaps, for the first time, the distance that separated my father from myself. It seemed as if he was tearing away the reverential veil, under which I had hitherto considered him: I found myself completely an orphan, since my mother was gone, and my father could never understand me: a new kind of grief oppressed my afflicted heart: and I fell again into the deepest despair. The tears, however, of my  
cousin,

cousin, and the sorrow of my worthy relations, still offered me occasions of tender emotion ; they had their effect, and I was snatched from the dangers that threatened my existence. Why, alas ! at that period did it not terminate ? It was my first affliction ; by how many others has it been followed ?

Here concludes the serene and splendid era of that tranquil life, passed in peace and in the enjoyment of blissful affections and beloved occupations, and resembling the beautiful mornings of spring, when the serenity of the sky, the purity of the air, the verdure of the foliage, and the fragrance of plants and flowers, enchant all animated nature, develope existence, and confer happiness by promising it.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

AN  
APPEAL  
TO  
IMPARTIAL POSTERITY.

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PART IV.





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## PART THE FOURTH.

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# PRIVATE MEMOIRS.

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### SECTION III.

Prison of St. Pélagie,  
Aug. 9, 1793.

**M**Y mother was not more than fifty years of age when I was deprived of her in so cruel a manner. An abscess in her head, which proceeded from an unknown cause, and which was only discovered by a discharge from her nose and ears that took place at her death, accounted for the strange obstruction of the respiratory passages, with which she had been so long afflicted: but for this incidental disease, it is probable that the second stroke of the palsy would not have been attended with fatal consequences. Her cheerful countenance and fresh complexion did not announce so untimely a death; her ailments appeared to be those of a time of life which women seldom attain without suffering a considerable change of constitution;

and the melancholy, and even the despondency that I had remarked for some time before, were sufficiently accounted for by moral causes, of which I was but too well aware.

Our last excursions into the country seemed to have given her new life: the very day she was torn from me I had left her in good health at three in the afternoon: I returned at half past five--the hand of death was already upon her, and at midnight she was no more. Poor playthings of un-pitying fate! why are sentiments so lively, and such momentous projects, attached to an existence so frail?

Thus was snatched from the world one of the best and most amiable women that ever inhabited it. Nothing brilliant rendered her remarkable, but every thing tended to endear her the moment she was known. Naturally wise and good, virtue did not seem to cost her any effort; the sound means to render it amiable and gentle, like herself. Prudent, calm, and tender-hearted, without being subject to any excess of sensibility, her pure and tranquil spirit pursued its even course like the docile stream that bathes with equal gentleness the foot of the rock which holds it captive, and the valley which at once it enriches and adorns. Her sudden death made me experience the most heart-rending pangs, and most violent transports of grief.

'It is a good thing to possess sensibility; it is unfortunate to have so much of it,' said, mournfully at my side, the Abbé Legrand, who came to see me at the house of my aged relations. When I began to recover, they hastened to invite, and to receive in succession, the different persons with whom I was acquainted, on purpose to familiarize me with external objects. I seemed not to exist in that world where I was placed: absorbed by my sorrow, I scarcely perceived what was passing around me. I did not speak, or, if I did, my replying to my own thoughts, instead of attending to those of others, made me appear like a distracted creature. Then again the beloved image which was always present to my mind, recalling by starts the dreadful idea of my loss, sudden shrieks escaped me, my outstretched arms stiffened, and I fainted away!

Although incapable of any application, I had lucid intervals, in which I perceived the sorrow of my relations, their affection, and the kind attentions of my cousin; and in which I tried all I could to diminish their anxiety. The Abbé Legrand possessed sagacity enough to judge that it was necessary to talk to me a great deal concerning my mother, in order to render me capable of thinking of any thing else. Accordingly he conversed with me about her, and led me insensibly to reflections and ideas, which, without being foreign to the subject, banished the habitual recollection of my loss. As soon as he believed me sufficiently recovered to look

at a book, he conceived the idea of bringing me the *Héloïse* of *Jean Jaques Rousseau* ; and the perusal of it was in truth the first alleviation of my sorrow. I was then twenty-one years of age : I had read a great deal ; I was acquainted with a considerable number of writers, historians, learned men, and philosophers : but Rousseau made an impression on my mind similar to that which Plutarch had done when I was eight years old. It appeared that this was the intellectual food that suited me, and the interpreter of ideas which I entertained before ; but which he alone had the art of explaining to my satisfaction.

Plutarch had prepared me to become a republican ; he had called forth that vigour and elevation of mind which constitute the character ; and had inspired me with a real enthusiasm in favour of freedom and of public virtue. Rousseau pointed out the domestic happiness to which I had a right to aspire, and the ineffable enjoyments which I was capable of tasting. Ah ! while able to put me more effectually upon my guard against what is called an *indiscretion*, why was it not also in his power to protect me against a serious attachment ? I brought into that corrupt world in which I was doomed to live, and into the revolution which I was then far from foreseeing, a mind stored long beforehand with all that could render me capable of great sacrifices, and expose me to great misfortunes. Death will only be the period of both. I expect



expect it, and I should not have thought of filling up the short interval which separates us with the recital of my own story, if Calumny had not dragged me forward on the stage, on purpose to make a more cruel attack upon those whom she seeks to ruin. I take a pleasure in publishing truths that interest not myself alone ; and am determined not to conceal a single fact, that their connexion may serve to give them demonstration.

I did not return to my father's without experiencing the sensations always inspired by the sight of those places which we have been accustomed to inhabit in company with friends who are no more. The ill-judged precaution of removing my mother's portrait had been taken, as if the vacancy were not more calculated than the picture itself to awaken a painful recollection of my loss. I instantly demanded it, and it was restored.

Domestic cares devolving entirely on me, I made them my occupation ; but they were not very numerous in a family consisting of only three persons. I never could comprehend how the attention of a woman who possesses method and activity can be engrossed by them, let her household be as considerable as it may ; for supposing it great, there is a great number of persons to take part of them off her hands ; and nothing is wanting but a proper distribution of employments, and a small share of vigilance. In the different situations of the kind, in which I have found myself, nothing has ever

been done but by my orders: and yet when those cares gave me the most occupation, they scarcely ever consumed more than two hours a day. People who know how to employ themselves, always find leisure moments, while those who do nothing are in want of time for every thing. Besides, it is not surprising that the women who pay or receive useless visits, or who think themselves badly dressed if they have not devoted a great deal of time to their toilet, should find the days long and tiresome, and at the same time, too short for the performance of their duties; but I have seen what are termed notable women rendered insupportable to the world, and even to their husbands, by a fatiguing pre-occupation about their trifling concerns. I know nothing so disgusting as this ridiculous conduct, nor so well calculated to render a man attached to any other woman rather than to his wife. She must, no doubt, appear to him a fit person for his house-keeper; but is not likely to cure him of the desire of seeking more amiable accomplishments elsewhere.

I think that a wife should keep the linen and clothes in order, or cause them so to be kept, suckle her children, give directions concerning the cookery, or superintend it herself, but without saying a word about it, and with such a command of temper, and such a management of her time, as may leave her the means of talking of other matters, and of pleasing no less by her good humour, than by the graces natural  
to

to her sex. I have already had occasion to remark, that it is nearly the same in the government of states as of families. Those famous housewives who are always expatiating on their labours, are sure either to leave much in arrears, or to render themselves tiresome to every one around them; and in like manner those men in power, so talkative and so full of business, only make mighty bustle about the difficulties they are in, because too awkward and too ignorant to remove them.

My studies became dearer to me than ever, and constituted my consolation. Left alone still more than ever, and often in a melancholy humour, I found myself under the necessity of writing. I was fond of rendering an account of my own ideas to myself, and the intervention of my pen assisted me in putting them in order. When I did not employ it, I was rather lost in reveries than engaged in meditation; but with my pen I kept my imagination within bounds, and pursued a regular chain of reasoning. I had already begun to make some collections, which I have since augmented, and entitled, 'The Works of Leisure Hours, and various Reflections.' I had nothing further in view than to fix my opinions, and to have witnesses of my sentiments, when on some future day I might confront them with one another, so that their gradations or their changes might serve me at once as a lesson and a record. I have a pretty large packet of these juvenile works piled up in the dusty corner of my

library, or perhaps in a garret. Never, however, did I feel the smallest temptation to become an author: I perceived at a very early period, that a woman who acquires the title loses far more than she gains. She forfeits the affection of the male sex, and provokes the criticism of her own. If her works be bad, she is ridiculed, and not without reason; if good, her right to them is disputed; or if envy be forced to acknowledge the best part to be her own, her character, her morals, her conduct, and her talents, are scrutinized in such a manner that the reputation of her genius is fully counterbalanced by the publicity given to her defects.

Besides, my happiness was my chief concern; and I never saw the public intermeddle with that of any one without marring it. I know nothing so agreeable as to be rated at our full worth by the people with whom we live; nor any thing so empty as the admiration of a few persons whom we are never likely to meet again.

Ah, my God! what an injury was done me by those who took upon them to withdraw the veil under which I wished to lie concealed! During twelve years of my life I shared in my husband's labours as I participated in his repasts, because one was as natural to me as the other. If any part of his works happened to be quoted, in which particular graces of style were discovered; or if a flattering reception was given to any of the academic trifles, that he took a pleasure in transmitting to the  
learned



learned societies, of which he was a member; I partook of his satisfaction, without remarking that it was my own composition ; and not unfrequently he brought himself to believe that he had been in a happier disposition than usual when he had written a passage, which in reality proceeded from *my* pen. If, during his administration, an occasion occurred for the expression of great and striking truths, I poured forth my whole soul upon the paper ; and it was but natural that its effusions should be preferable to the laborious teemings of a secretary's brain. I loved my country ; I was an enthusiast in the cause of liberty ; I was unacquainted with any interest or any passions that could enter into competition with that enthusiasm ; my language consequently could not but be pure and pathetic, as it was that of the heart and of truth.

I was so taken up with the importance of my subject, that I had not a thought to throw away upon myself. Once only I was diverted by a curious coincidence of circumstances : That was while writing to the pope, to claim the French artists imprisoned at Rome. A letter to the pope, in the name of the Executive Council of France, sketched secretly by the hand of a woman, in the humble closet, which Marat was pleased to term a *boudoir* \*, appeared to me so strange a thing, that I laughed heartily after

\* A private apartment decked out with all the refinements of Asiatic luxury, and consecrated to voluptuousness. — *Transf.*

I had



I had finished it. The pleasure of those contrasts consisted in their secrecy; but that was necessarily less attainable in a situation which was no longer that of a private individual, and where the eye of a clerk surveys the hand-writing he is copying. There is nothing singular however in all this, unless it be its novelty. Why should not a woman act as secretary to her husband without depriving him of any portion of his merit? It is well known that ministers cannot do every thing themselves; and surely, if the wives of those of the old government, or even of the new, had been capable of making draughts of letters, of official dispatches, or of proclamations, their time would have been better employed in so doing, than in soliciting and intriguing first for one *friend*, and then for another: the one excludes the other by the very nature of things. If those who found me out had formed a right judgment of things, they would have saved me from a sort of celebrity, to which I never aspired: instead of now spending my time in refuting falsehood, I should be reading a chapter of Montaigne, painting a flower, or playing an ariette; and should thus beguile the solitude of my prison, without sitting down to write my confession. But I am anticipating a period which I had not as yet attained; I remark it without constraint, as I have done it without scruple: since I am the person to be described, it is necessary that I should be exhibited with all my irregularities. I do not conduct  
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my pen, it carries me along with it wherever it pleases, and I let it have its own way.

My father seriously endeavoured, in the early part of his widowhood, to remain more at home than hitherto ; but he was attacked by *emmi* : and when once the love of his profession proved insufficient to prevent that distemper of the mind, it was not at all surprising that my efforts to cure it should be of no avail. I wished to converse with him, but we had few ideas in common, and it is probable that he already inclined to a species of discourse in which he would not have wished to see me an adept. I often engaged him in a game of piquet, but a game of piquet with his daughter was hardly interesting enough to keep him awake ; besides, he well knew that cards were my aversion, and in spite of my desire to persuade him that they afforded me entertainment, and in spite of my endeavours *really* to relish the pleasure of amusing him, he persisted in considering my playing as the mere effect of complaisance.

I could have wished to render his home agreeable to him ; but the means were not in my power. My only acquaintances were my aged relations, whom we sometimes went to see, but who never stirred out of doors. It would have been well if he had formed a little society at home ; but unfortunately, he had found one elsewhere, and was well aware of the impropriety of introducing such company to his daughter.—Was my mother really in the wrong in secluding herself from the world,

world, and in not making her house gay enough to captivate her husband? This would be blaming her on too slight grounds, and it would also be unjust to consider my father as very reprehensible on account of a few errors of which he himself became the victim.

There is such a connexion between the evils which necessarily result from a first cause, that it always behoves us to revert to that original mischief to account for all the rest.

The legislators of the present day endeavour to form a general good, whence the happiness of each individual is to spring; but I am greatly afraid that this is putting the cart before the horse. It would be more conformable to nature, and perhaps to reason, to study well what constitutes domestic happiness, and to ensure it to individuals in such a way that the common felicity should be composed of that of each citizen, and that all should be interested in preserving an order of things, to which such blessings would be due. However specious the written principles of a constitution may be, if I behold a portion of those who have adopted it immersed in grief and tears, I shall consider it as no better than a political monster; and if those who do not weep, rejoice in the sufferings of the rest, I shall say that it is atrocious, and that its authors are either weak or wicked men.

In a marriage where the parties are ill-matched, the virtue of one of them may maintain order and

peace ; but the want of happiness will be experienced sooner or later, and produce inconveniences more or less to be deplored. The fabric of such unions resembles the system of our modern politicians—it is defective at the base, and some day or other must needs tumble to the ground, in spite of the art employed in its construction.

The persons whom my mother would have naturally collected around her, would have been such as resembled herself ; and these would not have tallied with the temper of my father ; while, on the other hand, those whom he would have wished to receive as daily visitors, would not only have been disagreeable to my mother, but incompatible with the manner in which she wished to bring me up. It therefore behoved her to confine herself to her own family, and to cultivate only those slight connexions which produce an acquaintance without creating an intimacy.

Every thing went on well, while my father, with an agreeable profession and a young wife, found all the employment and all the pleasure that were necessary to his happiness within his own walls. But he was a year younger than my mother ; she began early in life to experience infirmities ; various circumstances combined to damp his ardour for labour ; and the desire of getting rich made him embark in several hazardous enterprises :—from that moment all was lost. The love of labour is the principal virtue of social man ; it is more particularly



larly that of an individual who does not possess a cultivated mind ; the moment that his industry slackens, danger is at hand ; if it totally subside, he must become the prey of unruly passions, which are always the more fatal in proportion as he is less informed, because he is consequently less able to keep them within bounds.

Become a widower at the very period when he stood in need of new chains to attach him to his home, my poor father kept a mistress, that he might not present his daughter with a mother-in-law ; he gamed, to indemnify himself for his loss of business, and for his expences ; and though still an honest man, and still fearful of wronging any one, he contrived to ruin himself by insensible degrees.

My relations, who were plain honest people, little versed in pecuniary matters, and who confided in my father's fondness for his daughter, had neglected to demand an inventory \* at the death of his wife ; my interest appeared to be perfectly safe in his hands ; and they would have thought such a request an injury to his honour. I had reason to think otherwise ; but as I should have deemed it indecent to reveal my suspicions, I looked forward to the event in silent resignation.

\* In France there was generally a clause in the marriage contract, by which the husband engaged to preserve his wife's fortune, and all her *personal effects*, for her children, or to restore them to her relations in case she left no issue.—*Transf.*

I was



I was now become sole mistress of the house, and divided my time between my domestic occupations and my studies, which I sometimes quitted to give answers to those who were vexed at finding my father so frequently from home. The number of his apprentices was reduced to two, who were nevertheless able to do all his business: one of them only boarded in the house.

Our servant, a little woman, fifty-five years of age, thin, alert, lively, and gay, was extremely attached to me, because I rendered her life comfortable. When I was unaccompanied by my father, she always attended me in my walks, which did not extend beyond the residence of my aged relations or the church. I had not been seized with a new fit of devotion; but what was no longer due to my mother's peace of mind, was still due to the good order of society, and to the edification of my fellow-creatures. Actuated by this principle, I carried with me to church, if not the tender piety of former days, at least as much decency, and the same air of attention. I did not indeed follow the priest in his recital of the service; but read some christian work, I still retained a great liking for St. Augustine; and assuredly there are fathers of the church, as well as others, whom a person may peruse without being a bigotted christian: there is food in them both for the heart and for the mind.

I wished to go through a course of preachers, living and dead, the eloquence of the pulpit being  
of

of such a nature, as to enable great talents to display themselves in all their splendour. I had already read Bossuet and Flechier ; I took a pleasure in reading them again with a more experienced eye, and made an acquaintance with Bourdaloue and Massillon. It was highly whimsical to see those pious personages marshalled on my little shelves in the same line with *The System of Nature*, Raynal, and De Pauw ; but a thing still more so was, that by dint of reading sermons, the whim took me of writing one myself. I was vexed at our preachers always recurring to mysteries ; it seemed to me that they ought to have composed moral discourses, in which the devil and the incarnation should have been left totally out of the question : I therefore took up my pen to try what work I could make of it, and wrote a sermon on *brotherly love*. It served to amuse my little uncle, who was become a canon of Vincennes, and who said it was a pity that I had not thought of that species of composition at the time he was obliged to deliver discourses from the pulpit, as in that case he would certainly have made use of mine.

I had often heard the logic of Bourdaloue highly extolled : I ventured however in some measure to differ from his admirers, and actually wrote a criticism on one of his most esteemed discourses ; but I shewed it to no one. I was fond of rendering an account of my opinions to myself, without feeling the smallest wish to make a display of my learning  
before

before any person whatever. Massillon, less lofty than Bourdaloue, and far more affecting, obtained the tribute of my praise. I was not then acquainted with the Protestant preachers, among whom Blair in particular has cultivated with equal simplicity and elegance that kind of pulpit oratory, of which I conceived the existence, and which I could have wished to see in vogue.

As to the preachers of my own time, I heard the Abbé l'Enfant, towards the end of his best days: politeness and reason appeared to me his leading characteristics. Father Elizée was already out of fashion, notwithstanding his excellent logic and the purity of his diction: his mind was too metaphysical, and his delivery too simple, to captivate the vulgar for any length of time.

Paris in those days was a singular place: that common sewer of all the impurities of the kingdom, was also the focus of taste and knowledge: preacher or comedian, professor or mountebank, whoever in short possessed abilities, was sure to find followers in his turn; but the first abilities in the universe could not long fix the public attention, for which novelty was always necessary, and which was attracted by noise no less than by merit. A certain Ex-Jesuit, who was become a missionary, and made a parade of his going to court, succeeded by those means in obtaining great popular applause. I went also to hear the Abbé de Beauregard: he

was a little man, with a powerful voice, who declaimed with uncommon impudence, and with a vehemence equally extraordinary, retailing common-place observations in a tone of inspiration, and supporting them by gestures so terrible, that he persuaded a great number of people they were the finest things in the world. I did not then perceive, as experience has taught me since, that men, assembled in great numbers, rather possess long ears than great judgment; that to astonish is to seduce them; and that whoever assumes the authority of commanding, disposes them to obey; nor could I find utterance for my astonishment at the success of this personage, who was either a great fanatic, or a great rogue, or perhaps both. I had not sufficiently analysed the circumstances accompanying the harangues delivered from the tribunes of the ancient republics; if I had, I should have formed a better judgment concerning the means of working upon the passions of the people. But I shall never forget a low fellow who stood directly opposite the pulpit in which Beauregard was acting the posture-master, with his eyes fixed on the orator, his mouth open, and involuntarily expressing his stupid admiration in the three following words, which I perfectly recollect: ‘How he sweats!’ Such then are the means of imposing upon the ignorant! and how much was Phocion in the right, when, surprised at finding himself applauded



plauded in an assembly of the people, he asked his friends, if he had not said some very foolish thing?

What an admirable *clubbist* would this M. de Beauregard have made ; and how many members of the popular societies, in their enthusiasm for brazen-faced babblers, have recalled to my mind the expression of the man above mentioned : ‘ *How he sweats !* ’

The danger I had been in had made some noise ; it should seem that it was considered either as very uncommon, or very meritorious, in a young woman to endanger her own life by her excessive sorrow at her mother’s death. I received many marks of regard on this occasion, which were extremely grateful to me. One of the first who bestowed them was M. de Boismorel, whom I had not seen since his visits to my grandmother. I perceived the impression made upon him by the change that had taken place in my person since that period. He returned at a time when I was absent, and held a long conference with my father, who no doubt mentioned my studies, and shewed him the little apartment in which I passed my time : he looked at my books ; my *works* were upon the table ; they excited his curiosity ; and my father enabled him to gratify it, by putting them into his hands.

Great was my displeasure and heavy were my complaints, when I found, on my return, that my asylum had been violated. My father indeed assured me that



he should never have done such a thing for a person of less gravity, or less worthy of consideration, than M. de Boismorel : but all his reasoning could not reconcile me to a proceeding which was an attack at once upon liberty and property ; it was disposing, without my consent, of that to which confidence alone could lay claim. But the mischief was already done, and the next day I received a very handsome letter from M. de Boismorel, couched in terms too flattering not to procure his pardon for having availed himself of my father's indiscretion, and making me an offer of every thing his library contained. I did not receive it with indifference ; from that moment we commenced a correspondence, and for the first time in my life I enjoyed upon reflection, all the pleasure which sensibility and self-love make us feel when we find ourselves prized by those on whose judgment we set a value.

M. de Boismorel no longer resided within the walls of Paris ; his partiality for the country, and his wish not to remove his mother to too great a distance from the capital, had made him purchase *Le Petit Bercy*, a charming house, situated a little below Charenton, and of which the garden extended to the banks of the Seine. He pressed us much to take it in our walks, and testified the strongest desire to receive us there. Recollecting the reception formerly given me by his mother, I did not feel inclined to encounter it again, and long  
resisted

resisted my father's entreaties. He insisted however ; and as I did not wish to object to the little parties he sometimes took it in his head to propose to me, we set off one day for Bercy, and found the ladies of the Boismorel family sitting together in the summer parlour. The presence of the daughter-in-law, whose amiable disposition I had heard highly extolled, inspired me all at once with that modest assurance, which was necessary to prevent any alteration from taking place in mine. The mother, whose haughty tone my reader will remember, and to whom increasing years had brought no increase of humility, behaved, notwithstanding, with much greater politeness to a young woman who seemed sensible of her own importance, than she had done to the child whom she considered as utterly insignificant. What a fine girl your daughter is, M. Philpon ! Why, do you know that my son is quite enchanted with her ? Pray tell me, Mademoiselle, don't you think of getting a husband ?—There are people, Madam, who have already thought for me upon that subject ; but as to myself, I have not yet met with sufficient reasons to induce me to change my situation.—Your are very difficult, I fancy ! Pray, should you have any objection to a middle-aged man ?—An acquaintance with the person could alone determine my consent, my repugnance, or my dislike.—Matches of that sort are generally productive of the most lasting happiness ; a young man often goes astray, even when

we think him the most attached to us.—And why, mother, said M. de Boismorel, who was just come into the room, would not you wish the young lady to believe herself capable of captivating him entirely?—She is dressed with a great deal of taste, said Madame de Boismorel to her daughter-in-law.—Ah! very well indeed, and with so much decency! replied the young woman, with that gentle tone of voice peculiar to devotees; for she was of that description, and the little wings of her cap brought forward over an agreeable face, that had seen thirty-four summers, were in the style of that religious character. How different, continued she, from the paltry feathers of giddy-headed girls! You don't love feathers, do you, Mademoiselle?—I never wear any, Madam, because it seems to me that they would announce a condition in life, and a fortune, that do not belong to an artist's daughter going about on foot.—But would you wear them if you were in a different situation?—I do not know; I attach little importance to such trifles. I only consider what is suitable to myself, and should be very sorry to judge of others from the superficial information afforded by their dress.

The answer was severe, but its point was blunted by the soft tone of voice in which it was pronounced. A philosopher! said the young lady, with a sigh, as if she had discovered that I was not one of her way of thinking.

After

After a scrupulous examination of my person, mingled with a great number of fine things like those I have just related, M. de Boismorel put an end to the inventory of my charms, by proposing a visit to the garden and the library. I admired the situation of the former, where he made me remark a fine cedar of Lebanon ; I viewed the library with an eye of interest, and pointed out the books, and even the collections that I wished him to lend me ; such, for instance, as *Bayle*, and the transactions of the different academies of sciences. From the ladies we received an invitation to dinner on an appointed day, of which we availed ourselves ; and I soon perceived, by two or three men of business, who, with ourselves, made up the whole of the guests, that care had been taken to provide fit company for my father, without attending to *me*. But M. de Boismorel had recourse, as before, to the library and the garden, where the conversation took an agreeable turn. A part was borne in it by his son, a young man of seventeen, sufficiently ugly, and of manners rather singular than agreeable. Nor did the fine company which came in the evening, and on which I cast an eye of observation, appear to me very engaging, in spite of their titles : the daughters of a marquis, learned counsellors, a prior, and several antiquated dowagers, talked with more importance, but quite as insipidly as grey sisters, church-wardens, and sober cits. These glimpses which I stole of the great world, disgusted me



with it, and attached me more than ever to my own way of life. M. de Boismorel did not lose the opportunity, of keeping up a connexion, on which, perhaps, he grounded some project for the future : he so managed matters, that the two fathers and the two children formed a distinct party. It was in this manner also that he carried me to the public assembly of the French academy, on the next anniversary of St. Louis. These assemblies were, at that time, the resort of the best company, and exhibited all those ridiculous contrasts, which our manners and our follies could not fail to produce. On the morning of St. Louis's day, high mass was chaunted in the chapel of the academy by the singers of the Opera, after which a fashionable preacher pronounced a panegyric on the fainted king. The Abbé de Besplas performed the office ; and I listened to him with great pleasure, notwithstanding the subject was trite ; for his discourse was interspersed with bold traits of philosophy, and indirect satire on the court, which he was obliged to cancel before he sent his sermon to the press.

M. de Boismorel, who was acquainted with him, was in hopes of obtaining a faithful copy, which he might communicate to me ; but the Abbé de Besplas, who was attached to the court, in quality of chaplain to *Monsieur*, thought himself very fortunate in purchasing a pardon for his audacity by the entire sacrifice of the passages it had inspired. In the evening, the sitting of the academy opened a fine field



field for the first wits in the kingdom, by virtue of the seats they occupied ; for the noblemen, who were proud of seeing their names inscribed on the list of members, and of exhibiting themselves in their arm-chairs ; for the *amateurs*, who came to listen to the former, to gaze upon the latter, and to shew themselves to the whole assembly; and for the pretty women, who were sure of attracting their attention.

I took particular notice of *D'Alembert*, whose name, *Miscellanies*, and writings on the *Encyclopedia*, excited my curiosity ; his little face, and squeaking voice, made me think a philosopher's works better worth contemplation than his person. The Abbé de Lille confirmed my remark as to men of letters, by reciting the most charming verses in the most disagreeable tone. The panegyric of *Catinat*, by Laharpe, bore away the prize, and was highly deserving of its success.

As free from affectation at the academy as at church, and as I have ever remained at the theatre, I bore no part in the noisy applause bestowed, with rapture, upon the most striking passages, and not unfrequently with ostentation on those which every one wished to have the credit of remarking. I was exceedingly attentive, listening without paying any regard to the observers ; and when I was moved, I wept without even suspecting that my doing so would appear singular to any one. I had reason however to perceive that it was a  
novelty ;

novelty ; for, on the breaking up of the assembly, while M. de Boismorel was conducting me to the door, I saw several persons pointing me out to one another with a smile, which I was not vain enough to take for admiration, but in which there was nothing that indicated contempt ; and I heard them saying something about my sensibility. I experienced a mixed sentiment of surprise and agreeable confusion, which I cannot describe ; and was very happy when I was at last able to escape from their sight, and from the crowd.

The panegyric of Catinat suggested to M. de Boismorel the idea of an interesting pilgrimage. He proposed to me to pay a visit to St. Gratien, where that great man ended his days in retirement, far from honours and the court. It was an excursion perfectly suited to my taste. M. de Boismorel came one Michaelmas day, with his son, to call on my father and myself ; and we all repaired together to the banks of the lake which embellishes the valley of Montmorency. From the lake we proceeded to St. Gratien, and rested ourselves in the shade of the trees which Catinat planted with his own hands ; and then, after a frugal dinner, returned to pass the rest of the day in the delightful park of Montmorency, where we saw the little house that *Jean Jaques* \* had inhabited, and enjoyed all the pleasure afforded by a beautiful country to

\* Rousseau.

several persons who contemplate it with the same eye. After one of those moments of repose, in which we consider the majesty of nature in silence, M. de Boismorel took a paper, in his own hand-writing, out of his pocket, and read to us an anecdote which he had copied, and which was then but little known. It was the trait of Montesquieu, when discovered at Marseilles by a young man whose father he had redeemed from slavery, endeavouring to escape from the thanks of those whom he had obliged.

Deeply impressed with a sense of Montesquieu's generosity, I did not exclusively admire his obstinacy in denying that he was the adored deliverer of a family transported with joy: the generous man does not look for acknowledgments; but however noble it may be to decline the testimonies of gratitude, it is not less the part of a great mind to receive its effusions. I even think it is a new obligation conferred on people of sensibility, to whom we have been of service; for it is to them a way of discharging their debt.

It must not, however, be supposed, that I was perfectly at my ease in regard to these frequent meetings of my father and M. de Boismorel: I saw with sorrow that there were no points of resemblance between them. His son looked at me a great deal; and did not please me at all. I thought that his manner rather indicated curiosity than affection; besides, the three or four years between his age and mine, placed us at a considerable distance  
from

from each other. All this his father perceived, and I was afterwards told that he had one day said to mine, with an affectionate squeeze of the hand : Ah ! if my child were but worthy of yours : I might appear singular, but I should esteem myself one of the happiest of mankind !—I had no suspicion of any thing of the sort : I did not even calculate the distance between us ; but I felt it, and it prevented any such idea from rising in my mind. I looked upon M. de Boismorel's conduct as that of a prudent and benevolent man, who honoured my sex, felt particular esteem for *me*, and, if I may use the expression, protected my inclinations. His correspondence resembled him ; its leading feature was a gentle gravity, and it bore the stamp of respectful friendship, and of a mind exalted above prejudices. By his means I became acquainted with what were called the *novelties* (*les nouveautés*) of the learned and literary world. I seldom saw him, but I heard from him every week. To prevent the frequency of messages by his servants to me, as well as to save me the expence of carriage from Bercy, he ordered the books intended for my perusal to be left with the porter of his sister, Madame de Favieres, whither I used to send and fetch them. M. de Boismorel, who had a great respect for the republic of letters, and who fancied, in consequence of his prepossession in my favour, that I might be usefully employed in its service, or else was desirous of putting me to a trial, advised me to choose  
the

the line of literature that suited me, and to sit down seriously to write. At first I took it for a compliment; but by returning to the advice, he gave me an opportunity of setting forth my principles on that subject, my well-founded aversion to coming forward in any manner on the theatre of the world, and my disinterested love of study, which I wished to make instrumental to my happiness, without aiming at any kind of fame that might tend to disturb it. After having seriously exhibited my doctrine, I changed the reasoning into verses, which flowed spontaneously from my pen, and of which the ideas were superior to the poetry. I recollect, that when speaking of the *gods*, and the way in which they have distributed our duties and rewards, I expressed myself thus :

To man's aspiring sex 'tis given  
 To climb the highest hill of fame,  
 To tread the shortest road to heaven,  
 To gain, by death, a deathless name.

Of well-fought fields, and trophies won,  
 The mem'ry lives while ages pass,  
 Extant in everlasting stone,  
 Or written on retentive brass.

But to poor feeble woman-kind  
 The meed of glory is denied :  
 Within a narrow sphere confin'd,  
 The lowly virtues are their pride:

Yet



Yet not deciduous is their fame,  
 Ending where frail existence ends :  
 A sacred temple holds their name—  
The bosom of surviving friends \*.

M. de Boismorel answered me sometimes in similar language, and in verses scarcely better than my own ; but neither he nor I attached the smallest importance to our poetical effusions. One day he came to consult me concerning the means of reviving his son's application to his studies, which of late had suffered considerable diminution.

That young man was naturally intimate with his contemporary, and first cousin, M. de Favieres, a counsellor in parliament at the age of twenty-one, who joined to the usual giddiness of youth, all the confidence of a magistrate, proud of his gown, without attending to his duties ; and all the freedom of manners, perhaps even the licentiousness, of an only son born to a considerable estate.

\* *Aux hommes ouvrant la carrière  
 Des grands et des nobles talents,  
 Ils n'ont mis aucune barrière  
 A leur plus sublimes élans.  
 De mon sexe foible et sensible,  
 Ils ne veulent que des vertus ;  
 Nous pouvons imiter Titus,  
 Mais dans un sentier moins pénible.  
 Jouissez d'être admis à toutes ces sortes de gloires ;  
 Pour nous le temple de Mémoire  
 Est dans les cœurs de nos amis.*

The

The Italian theatre and the Opera employed the two cousins much more than *Cujas* and *Bartole* did the one, or the mathematics the other. I must request you, said M. de Boismorel, to write a severe letter to my son, in terms sensible and impressive, such as your mind cannot fail to suggest, and such as may serve to awaken his self-love, and inspire him with generous resolutions.—Who, *I*, Sir ! Do you mean *me* ? (I could scarcely believe my ears.) With what face, pray, can I preach to your son ? —You may adopt any mode you please, with the certainty that your name shall remain concealed. We will have the letter conveyed as if it came from a person who is in the habit of seeing him, who is acquainted with his proceedings, and who warns him of the danger that awaits his steps. I will take care to have it delivered at a moment when it is likely to have its full effect : I only wish him not to suspect me of any hand in the business ; and in due time will let him know to what physician he is indebted for his cure.—Oh ! be sure you never mention my name !—but you certainly have friends who could do this better than I.—I think otherwise, and request it of you as a favour.—Well, then, I will lay aside my scruples, to prove to you my desire to oblige ; and will make a rough draught, of which you shall give me your opinion, and which I will beg you to correct.

That very evening I wrote a very pointed, and somewhat ironical letter ; such as I conceived calculated to flatter the vanity, and to excite the  
 thinking

thinking faculty of a youth, to whom it is necessary to talk of his advantages when you wish to recall him to serious occupations. M. de Boismorel was delighted, and begged me to forward it without altering a word. I sent it to Sophia, requesting her to put it into the post-office at Amiens, and waited with no small degree of impatience to know what effect my sermon would produce.

M. de Boismorel soon wrote me an epistle containing particulars which interested me exceedingly : he had brought together a number of circumstances which rendered the thing infinitely striking : the young man was affected ; and fancying that the celebrated Duclos was the author of the remonstrance, went to return him thanks : deceived in this conjecture, he next addressed himself to another of his father's friends, and found that he was not at all nearer the mark. Study, however, in some degree resumed her reign.

It was not long after this transaction that M. de Boismorel, going with his son from Bercy to Vincennes, where he knew I was on a visit to my uncle, and whither he was bringing me the *Georgics*, translated by the Abbé Delille, was struck by a *coup-de-soleil*. He made very light of it ; but was soon after taken ill with a headach, first followed by a fever, and then by a lethargy ; and died in the meridian of life, after an illness of a few days. Scarcely eighteen months had elapsed since we commenced our correspondence : I grieved for his death, I believe, more sincerely than his own son ;

nor

nor does his image ever revert to my mind without my feeling that painful regret, and that sentiment of veneration and concern, which accompany the remembrance of a virtuous man.

When my sorrow was a little allayed, I celebrated his memory in a monody, which no one ever saw, which I sung to my guitar, and which I have since forgotten, and lost. I never heard any thing farther of his family, unless that one day, when my father went to pay an occasional visit, the young de Boismorel, who then bore the name of Roberge, told him in a very cavalier manner, that he had found my letters to his father, and thrown them by in a corner, in order to return them if required; and that among them he had discovered the original of a certain epistle which he himself had formerly received. My father, who was well acquainted with all that had passed, and who made him little or no answer, perceived the young man was piqued; whence I concluded that he was a blockhead, and gave myself no further concern about him: I do not know whether I guessed aright.

Some time after, Madam de Favieres came to my father to employ him in the purchase of some jewels, or in the execution of some work. I happened to be in my little cell, and could overhear all that was passing in the next room. ‘Your daughter is a charming girl, Monsieur Phlipon: my brother used to say that she was one of the most sensible women he ever met with in his life; take

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care, however, that she does not set up for a wit: that would be very shocking indeed. Does she not, do you think, seem a little of the pedant? 'Tis to be apprehended; and, if I mistake not, I have heard something of the kind. She is a pretty-faced girl: a very good-looking girl indeed.' Upon my word, said I to myself, this is a very impertinent fine lady, and very like her mother: heaven defend me from ever seeing her face, or shewing her mine!

My father, who knew very well I was within hearing, did not think proper to call me, since I did not choose to shew myself; nor from that day to the present have I ever heard the voice of Madam de Favieres.

Hitherto I have scarcely mentioned my excellent cousin Trude. She was one of those kind souls, which heaven in its goodness formed for the honour of the human race, and the consolation of the unfortunate. Generous by nature, and amiable without art, I could never perceive any objection to her, but an excess of delicacy and virtuous pride. She would have thought herself defective in her duties, if she had left room to doubt her having fulfilled them. That was precisely the way to become completely the victim of a whimsical husband. Trude was a rustic, his ideas as extravagant as his temper was impetuous, and his behaviour brutal. He was engaged in the looking-glass trade, as all the Trudes have been, in regular succession, for several



several generations. Of an active disposition, laborious by fits, and assisted by the care and intelligence of an agreeable and prudent woman, he succeeded tolerably in business, and was indebted to his wife's merit for the kind countenance shewn him by his own family, who would have flighted him had he remained a single man.

My mother was very fond of her little cousin, who held her in singular veneration, and was strongly attached to me.

She proved it, as my reader has already seen, on the death of my mother: taken up in the day with her household affairs, and her husband, she insisted upon being my nurse during the night. She came from a considerable distance to perform the duties of a nurse; nor had I any other as long as I continued in danger. That circumstance naturally increased our intimacy, and we saw each other frequently. Her husband took it in his head to come still more frequently, unaccompanied by his wife. At first I bore with him on her account, in spite of his tiresome conversation; but at length he became insupportable, and I made use of all the management necessary with a wrong-headed man, to make him perceive that neither his quality of kinsman, nor that of husband to my much-beloved friend, could authorize such frequent visits, which would at any rate have been improper in the sickly and suffering state to which my sorrow had reduced me.

My dear cousin came less frequently, but he made tedious visits of three or four hours, notwithstanding my employing myself constantly, and even writing, to make him understand that I was in haste; and when I begged him in plain terms to retire, as I was at last forced to do, he went home in such a humour, and behaved so ill to his wife, that she entreated me to exert my patience for the sake of her domestic peace. On Sundays and holydays particularly, I was doomed to do penance: when the weather was fine I escaped, and appointed a meeting with his wife at the house of my aged relations; since the receiving her at home for a short time in his company, was not seeing her, but being a witness to the brutal behaviour of her surly husband. In the winter I managed another way: I gave a holyday to the maid, who locked, barred, and bolted every door; and I remained alone and quiet till eight o'clock at night. Trude came; could make nobody hear, came again, and sometimes walked for two or three hours round the house in the snow or rain, waiting for the moment of admission. To conceal myself when I was really there in company with any one, was almost impossible; and positively to forbid him the house by prevailing on my father to break off all connexion with this curious personage (which would have been difficult, because he had no children, and my father thought it prudent to preserve his good opinion), would have been coming to that  
 extremity

extremity which his wife dreaded, would have put an end to our intimacy, and would have exposed her to further afflictions.

I know nothing worse than to have connexions with a madman: there is no way of dealing with him but by means of a strait waistcoat; every thing else is of no avail. This brutal cousin was a plague to me, and I know nothing that can better prove the merit of his wife, than my refraining from having him thrown out of the window; but he would have returned by the chimney. To do him justice, however, Trude was not without a certain sort of politeness—rather a madman than a fool, he gave reason to suppose he knew how far he could carry his extravagance with impunity; for his coarse conversation was never indecent; and though for ever at variance with good-breeding and rationality, he never offended against modesty, or wounded the most delicate ear. When his wife was walking with me he watched us, and if we were accosted or saluted by any man, he became uneasy and furious till he found who it was. It will be imagined, perhaps, he was jealous of his wife, and that was in some degree true; but he was ten times more so on my account. In spite of so tormenting a life, Madam Trude's gentleness was not unaccompanied by gaiety; and she would pass one day in weeping, and the next in making merry with her friends.

It was her custom to give family entertainments, which were followed by a dance, once or twice during the winter season. Her cousin was always the heroine of the festival, and her husband was more amiable than usual for several days afterwards. At her house I became acquainted with two persons whom I will mention here: one was the Abbé Bexon, a little witty hump-backed man, the great friend of François de Neufchâteau, and of Maffon de Marvilliers, and author of a history of Loraine, that had but indifferent success. The celebrated Buffon sometimes employed his pen, as well as that of several others, to prepare materials and sketches, which he afterwards beautified by the vivid tints supplied by his brilliant imagination. Bexon, assisted by the interest of his protector Buffon, and by that of several women of quality, whose relations he had known at Remiremont, his native place, where there was a chapter of noble canonesse, became precentor of the holy chapel at Paris. He brought thither his mother and sister, who would furnish matter for an episode, if I were inclined to introduce any not necessarily connected with my subject.

The poor creature died too soon for the happiness of his tall sister, with black eyes begging for adorers, and with beautiful shoulders of which she was fond of making a display. He came twice to see me at my father's, and was so transported at finding Xenophon

nophon in folio on my table, that in the height of his ecstacy he would have kissed me. But as in *my* opinion there was no good reason for it, I calmed him so effectually by my reserve, that his wit ever after was unattended by raptures, nor did I see him more, unless at my cousin's house.

The other person was the worthy Gibert ; rigid in his morality, and infinitely gentle in his manners, he married at a very early age, a woman whose beauty was greater than her good temper, and had a son by her whose education was his chief delight. He had an employ in the administration of the post-office, and devoted his leisure moments to painting and music.

Gibert had about him all the marks of a just and sincere man ; nor was his conduct ever at variance with them. His faults were those of his judgment : his friendship was a sort of fanaticism ; and we were tempted, while we lamented, to respect his errors. Gibert had been connected from his infancy with a man for whom he professed equal veneration and attachment, in whose praise he was loud upon every occasion, and of whose friendship he was proud. Gibert was desirous of being acquainted with me ; his wife and he came to my father's ; I returned their visit, and as they did not go out much together, he came alone from time to time to repeat his visit. I always received him with particular pleasure, and in time we formed a connexion of a truly friendly nature.



ture. Gibert soon began to speak to me of his phoenix : it seemed as if he could not be happy till his friend and I had an opportunity of admiring each other ; and at last he invited him to meet me at dinner at his house. I met a man whose extreme simplicity bordered upon negligence. Speaking little, and never looking another in the face, it would have been difficult for one, who had never heard him mentioned, to form an opinion of him from a single interview ; and I confess, notwithstanding my particular taste for modest demeanour, I should willingly have taken him at his word in regard to his own importance. However, as he neither wanted sense nor information, people gave him the greater credit, whenever he happened to bring them to view ; and, like Gibert, supposed him to have more than he actually possessed. His wife, who was rather insignificant, but by no means destitute of sensibility, brought to mind the *intentique ora tenebant* of Virgil, whenever her husband opened his mouth to speak. He cannot, however, be a man altogether of a vulgar mind, who thus finds means to impose, even upon those who see him daily, in regard to his real merit : he must be great in something ; at least in dissimulation ; and if circumstances induce him to carry it as far as possible in important affairs, instead of the false philosopher obtaining undeserved esteem, he may become a villain at the expence of his fellow-creatures. History will enable

able us to judge of him by the sequel. I seldom saw this friend of Gibert. He abandoned a lucrative place, and France itself, in order to settle in Switzerland, whither liberty called him, and whither he was led by his taste for a country life. Let him depart in peace: he will return too soon.— That was the manner in which I became acquainted with *PACHE*; for *Pache* was the man. My readers will see how Gibert brought him to our house, ten years after, and introduced him to my husband, who thought him probity itself; mentioned him at a moment when his suffrage was sufficient to establish a man's reputation; and was the cause of his coming into administration, where he distinguished himself by nothing but follies, which procured him his removal to the mayoralty, where he authorized nothing but atrocities.

Madam Trude was extremely desirous of taking a journey, in order to visit a relation to whom she was much attached, and proposed being absent a fortnight or three weeks. Her husband objected to his *counter*'s remaining so long without its feminine ornament; but thought the thing feasible, provided I would consent to come now and then in the middle of the day to take her place. My cousin wished I would have the kindness to do so: her intimating so much, was quite enough to induce me not to refuse her; and my friendship made me willingly undertake the task. I went seven or eight times  
to

to take Madam Trude's place behind the counter. Her husband, highly delighted, and not a little proud, conducted himself with great propriety, attended to the external business, and seemed sensible of the kindness of my behaviour. It was decreed, that at one time in my life, and in spite of my aversion to trade, I should sell watch-glasses and spectacles. The situation was not agreeable. Trude lived in the *Rue Montmartre*, near the *Rue Ticquetonne*, where his successor must now reside: I can conceive nothing so dreadful as the noise of the carriages eternally rolling along, to a person standing in an open shop. I should soon have grown deaf, as my poor cousin now is.—Let us quit this unfortunate couple, whose fate we shall see hereafter, and return to my other relation.

I went to Mademoiselle Desportes' once or twice a week, on the days she was in the habit of receiving company; and fine portraits I should have to paint if the originals were worth the pains; but were I to portray counsellors of the *Châtelet*, like little *Mopinot*, whose pretensions to wit were grounded on epigrams; the bigotted *de la Presse*, who had no other fault than that of being choleric, and a Jansenist; a widow who hid a love of pleasure under the mask of commodious devotion, like Madam *de Blancfuné*; an old and rich bachelor, too disgusting to be named; a worthy man incessantly *reasoning*, and as regular as clock-work, like Baudin,

Baudin, the custom-house officer ; and a multitude of other individuals of different complexions, but of no greater value ; it would only be throwing away my colours, and my time. I should like, however, to meet Father Rabbe, a very shrewd Oratorian \*, rendered respectable by his age, and agreeable by his highly cultivated mind ; and with Doctor *Cofte*, who amused himself by imitating Perrault, without erecting a *Louvre*, and who spoke ill of matrimony, as the Devil makes grimaces at holy water.

Mademoiselle Desportes had inherited from her mother much delicacy and pride, joined to the art of employing her little fortune in commerce, without appearing to have any concern in it, and of dealing on a footing of confidence and equality with the rich and titled individuals who bought her goods. But as such a mode of transacting business is quite foreign to the spirit of trade, which supports itself by active speculations, she found her little inheritance growing smaller every day, and at last bad adieu to commerce, reducing her expences at the same time on a more moderate scale.

Her disposition, her manners, the sober way in which she lived, and the fondness she testified for me, had made my mother wish to see me cultivate her acquaintance. Accordingly she often sent me

\* The Oratorians were an order of monks.—*Transf.*

to her house. A party of piquet was the rallying-point of the society, the other members of which either chatted or worked. Mademoiselle Desportes, probably with a view of exercising my complaisance, often set me down to play, which was my aversion; but the assistance of a partner\*, and permission to laugh at my own absence of mind, rendered the trial of my patience less severe.

Here, in his turn, I cannot help bringing forward on the stage an old man lately arrived from Pondicherry, and with whom I kept up a frequent and agreeable intercourse for little less than a year. My father, some how or other (in the way of business I believe), had become acquainted with a reduced officer, metamorphosed into a clerk without a place, and had afterwards received him on the footing of a friend. His name was Demontchery. He was about six and thirty, of polished manners and insinuating conversation, and was possessed of those graces which are derived from a knowledge of the world, and perhaps from tender connexions with the fair. Demontchery was attentive to my father; but seldom came into my mother's apartment, who would not have suffered any man to pay his court to her. As to me, he frankly professed respect, esteem, and so forth, as well as an inclination to offer me his

\* Four-handed piquet is played very commonly in France.—  
*Transf.*



heart if fortune should prove more kind—She sent him on a voyage to the East Indies. He wrote to us, and did not conceal his wishes for such success as might enable him to return with well-founded pretensions; but being no more than a captain of sepoy, and too honourable a man to understand any thing about making money, he had not, I believe, got very forward in the world, when he returned after seven years absence, and learned that my hand had been disposed of a fortnight before. I know not what is become of him, nor the sentiments he might have inspired me with, if my inclinations had been free. During his stay at Pondicherry, he made acquaintance with M. de Sainte-Lette, one of the members of the council, and intrusted him with letters for my father, when the council dispatched Sainte-Lette to Paris, in 1776, to conduct some important affair.

Sainte-Lette was more than sixty years of age. He was a man whom a gay turn of mind, and strong passions, had led astray in his youth, when he squandered his fortune at Paris. He had gone over to America, and had remained thirteen years at Louisiana, as director of the Indian trade. Having afterwards removed to Asia, he was employed in the administration of public affairs at Pondicherry, and was endeavouring to amass the means of living or of dying in France, on some future day, with M. de Sevelinge, the friend of his youth,  
of

of whom I shall hereafter make some mention. A grave and solemn voice, distinguished by that accent which is derived from experience and adversity, and supported by the ready expression of a cultivated mind, struck me in Sainte-Lette, the first moment I heard him speak. Demontchery had spoken to him of me; and probably made him desire our acquaintance. My father was civil; and I paid him much attention, because he soon prepossessed me in his favour. I found his company very agreeable; he was fond of mine, and during his stay, never suffered a week to pass without paying me a visit.

Persons who have seen a great deal, are always worth hearing, and those who have felt a great deal, have always seen more than any other persons, even when they have travelled less than Sainte-Lette. He had more of that kind of information which is derived from experience, than of that which is collected from books: with less pretensions to the title of a learned man, than to that of a philosopher, he reasoned from his knowledge of the human heart; and still retained a taste for the lighter kinds of poetry, in which he was no mean proficient. He gave me some of his productions; and I communicated to him in return some of my *reveries*.—‘Mademoiselle,’ said he repeatedly, in the tone of prophecy, or in that of conviction, ‘you may do what you will to avoid it; but you will

will certainly write a book.'—'It shall be under another name then,' answered I, 'for I would sooner cut off my fingers than turn author.'

At my father's Sainte-Lette met a person with whom I was become acquainted a few months before, and who was fated to have a powerful influence over my future fortune, though I little thought so at the time: I have already said that Sophy, more taken up than I with paying and receiving visits, was far from finding it conducive to her advantage. She had spoken to me several times of a man of great merit, who had a place at Amiens, and was frequently at her mother's, while resident there; which, however, was not generally the case, because he visited Paris every winter, and in the summer often made long journies. She had only mentioned him, because in the insignificant crowd with which she was surrounded, she was pleased to meet with an individual whose instructive conversation always seemed to contain something new, whose austere, but simple manners, inspired confidence, and who was universally esteemed, though not universally beloved, because his severity, which bordered on the sarcastic, gave many people offence. Sophy had spoken to him also of her beloved friend. Nothing indeed was talked of in her family but the intimacy and constancy of a convent connexion, which acquired a certain degree of respectability from time. He had also seen my portrait, which Madam Can-

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net had hung up in a conspicuous situation. ‘Why then,’ he used to say, ‘do you not make me acquainted with this amiable friend? I go every year to Paris—Shall I never have a letter to deliver to her?’ He obtained the commission he desired in the month of December 1775: I was then in mourning for my mother, and in that state of tender melancholy, which follows violent grief. Whoever came on the part of Sophy, was sure of a good reception. ‘You will receive this,’ said my beloved friend in her letter, ‘from the hands of M. Roland de la Platiere, the philosopher you have sometimes heard me mention—an enlightened man, of spotless reputation, who can be reproached with nothing but his too great admiration for the ancients, at the expence of the moderns, whom he undervalues, and with being too fond of speaking of himself.’ This portrait can hardly be called a sketch; but the outline is well drawn. I found him a man considerably turned of forty; tall, and negligent in his carriage, with that stiffness which is often contracted by study; but his manners were easy and simple, and without possessing the fashionable graces, he combined the politeness of a well-bred man, with the gravity of a philosopher. Want of flesh, a complexion accidentally yellow, and a forehead very high, and very thinly covered with hair, did not destroy the effect of a regular set of features, though it rendered them rather respectable than engaging. There was besides great meaning in his smile;

smile ; and a most lively expression used to light up his countenance, and give him, as it were, a new face, whenever he grew animated in narration, or when any agreeable idea came across his mind. His voice was masculine, and his sentences were short (like those of a man afflicted with a difficulty of breathing) : his conversation, which was full of interesting matter, because his head was full of ideas, occupied the mind more than it pleased the ear, his language, though sometimes impressive, being always monotonous and harsh. An agreeable voice is, in my opinion, a very uncommon and very powerful accomplishment : it does not depend upon the quality of the sound alone ; but results also from that delicacy of sentiment which furnishes a variety of expression, and of tone.

*(I am interrupted, in order to be told that I am included in the indictment of Brissot, with other members recently apprehended. The tyrants are at bay : they think they shall be able to fill up the abyss beneath their feet with the bodies of their virtuous adversaries ; but they will fall in afterwards themselves. I am not dismayed at being sent to the scaffold in such company ; it is indeed disgraceful to live among villains.*

*I am going to dispatch this sheet as it is. It will be only beginning a new one, in case I should have it in my power.*

*Friday, October 4, the birth-day of my daughter, who is entering her thirteenth year).*



This effect of the organ of speech, a thing very different from a strong voice, is not more common among professional orators, than among the multitudes that compose our social circles. I looked for it in the three national assemblies, and could meet with nobody possessed of it in perfection. Mirabeau himself, with the commanding magic of a noble delivery, neither spoke in a pleasing key, nor pronounced in the most agreeable manner. The Clermonts came nearer to the mark—Where then, I may be asked, is your model? I might answer like the painter, when asked whence he took the charming air, that he gave to the heads created by his pencil?—Hence, said he, putting his finger to his forehead—I should put mine to my ears. I was never a great frequenter of the theatre; but I thought I could perceive that the kind of merit in question was equally uncommon there. *Larive*, the only one perhaps who deserves to be mentioned, did not come entirely up to my idea.

When upon entering the period of adolescence, I experienced that agitation which the desire of pleasing produces in the bosom of young women, I was moved at the sound of my own voice, and was obliged to modulate it in order to please myself. I can easily conceive that the exquisite sensibility of the Greeks made them set a high value upon every part of the art of speech; and I can also conceive it natural for *sanfculotisme* to make us disdain those graces, and to lead us to a barbarous rudeness,

rudeness, equally distant from the precision of the Spartans in their energetic language, and from the eloquence of the amiable Athenians.

But it is long since we parted with La Blancherie, either at Orleans, or elsewhere, and high time to give him his dismissal.

Returning shortly after my mother's death, he knew nothing of that event till he came to see us, and discovered a degree of surprise, and sorrow, that pleased and affected me; nor did I look upon him, in the repeated visits he afterwards paid me, with an eye of indifference. My father, who at first made it a rule to stay with me, when any one came, began to think the business of duenna was by no means amusing, and that it would be more convenient to leave me to myself, and the maid, and to shut his door against every body, whose age and gravity should not be such as to render his attendance unnecessary. He told me accordingly, that he intended to beg La Blancherie to discontinue his visits. I did not say a word in answer, although I felt some degree of pain. I reflected on that which I supposed my suitor would suffer from the prohibition, and determined to convey the intimation to him myself; for my father's manner made me fear he would give it in an unhandsome way. To tell the truth, La Blancherie had prepossessed me in his favour; and I thought it not impossible that I might love him: my head alone was working, I believe; but I was not in a fair way to

get on. I wrote then a handsome letter, which gave La Blancherie his discharge, and which deprived him of all hope of my receiving his answer, but which was not calculated to destroy any other he might entertain.

The ice thus broken gave a free course to tender and melancholy ideas, by which my happiness was not materially disturbed. Sophy came to Paris, and made some stay there with her mother and her sister Henrietta, who finding herself on a level with us, by the addition to our age, and the sedateness she had acquired, became also my friend. Her lively imagination struck fire out of every thing, and animated every connexion in which she had a share.

I went often to the garden of the Luxemburg with my two friends and Mademoiselle d'Hangard, and there I sometimes met La Blancherie. He used to bow to me respectfully; and I returned his salute not without emotion.—‘You are acquainted then with that gentleman?’ said Mademoiselle d'Hangard one day, having at first supposed his bow was meant for her.—‘Yes.’—‘Do you chance to know him too?’—‘Certainly I do, though I never spoke to him in my life; but I am in the habit of visiting the Miss Bordenaves, to the youngest of whom he paid his addresses.’—‘Is it long since?’—‘A year, or perhaps eighteen months. He found means to introduce himself; called there from time to time, and at last made a declaration in form: the young ladies

ladies are rich, and the youngest a pretty girl. He has not a shilling himself, and is a candidate for an heiress; for he made the same proposal to one of their acquaintance, as they afterwards heard; he was dismissed, and we have ever since been accustomed to call him the lover of the eleven thousand virgins\*—‘But, pray, how came you acquainted with him?’—‘By seeing him frequently at Madam l’Epine’s concert,’ said I, biting my lips, and keeping the rest to myself, not a little vexed at having thought myself possessed of the heart of a man, who, without doubt, had solicited my hand merely because I was an only daughter; and still more so at having written him a letter, which he did not deserve—Matter for meditation as to the exercise of my prudence on future occasions!

A few months had elapsed, when a little *Savoyard* came and told the maid somebody wished to speak with her, I forget where: she went out, returned, and informed me that M. La Blancherie had desired her to beg me to receive his visit. It was Sunday, and I was waiting for some of my relations. ‘Yes,’ answered I, ‘he may come, but let it be instantly; and since he is waiting for you at a little distance from the door, go and bring him in.’ La Blancherie came, and found me sitting by my fire-side.—‘I have not dared, Ma-

\* In allusion to a legendary tale, which states the *miraculous* martyrdom of eleven thousand virgins.—*Trans.*

demoiselle, to wait upon you, since the prohibition you sent me, though exceedingly desirous of seeing you; nor can I express all I suffered from the dear and cruel letter I then received. My situation has undergone a considerable change since that time; and I have now some projects, to which you are probably not altogether a stranger.' He immediately laid before me the plan of a work of morality and criticism, in the form of letters, and in the manner of the *Spectator*, and proposed to me to hear some of them. I let him go on without interrupting him, and even waited, after he had made a short pause, in order that he might get to the end of his rosary. When he had said all he had to say, I took my turn to speak, and observed to him, calmly and politely, that I had taken upon myself the care of requesting him to discontinue his visits, because the sentiments which he had declared to my father, made me suppose he attached some importance to their continuance, and I had wished to show him my gratitude by that mark of attention; that at my age, the imagination was busy on all occasions, and sometimes dressed up objects in very false colours; but that error was not a crime, and that I was sufficiently recovered from mine to render all concern on his part needless; that I admired his literary projects, without wishing to bear a part in them, any more than in those of others; that I confined myself to good wishes for the success of all the authors in the world; as well as for his, in all possible

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ble ways; and that it was to tell him so I had consented to receive him, in order that he might save himself in future all trouble of the kind; in consequence of which I begged him to put an end to his visit. Surprise, grief, agitation, every thing, in short, that is becoming in like cases, was about to be displayed. I stopped him by saying, I did not know whether the Miss Bordenaves, and the other ladies to whom he had paid his addresses, about the same time, had expressed themselves with equal frankness; but that mine was without bounds; and that the resolution it indicated did not admit of explanation. I rose at the same instant, making a curtesy, and that motion of the hand which points out the door to troublesome visitors. My cousin Trude came in; nor did I ever see his rugged face with greater pleasure. La Blancherie in the mean time effected his retreat in silence, and I never saw him after; but who has not since heard of the *Agent General of the correspondence for forwarding the arts and sciences*?

This hero having made his *exit*, let us return to Sainte-Lette and Roland.

We had reached the end of the summer 1776; and during the eight or nine preceding months I had seen M. Roland several times. His visits were not frequent; but he made long ones, like a person, who, not going to a particular place in order to shew himself, but because he has a satisfaction in being there, stays as long as he decently can. His

frank and instructive conversation never tired me, and he was fond of seeing me listen to him with attention ; a thing which I am very capable of, even with those who are not so well informed as Roland, and which has perhaps procured me still more friends than the talent of speaking with some facility. I had become acquainted with him on his return from Germany ; he was then preparing to make the tour of Italy, and settling his affairs, a thing to which prudent people seldom fail to attend, when on the eve of a long absence ; he had chosen me for the depositary of his manuscripts, which were to remain in my possession in case he should meet with any mischance. I was much affected by this particular mark of esteem, and received it with many thanks. The day of his departure he dined at my father's with Sainte-Lette ; and on taking leave, begged permission to salute me. I know not how it is, but that favour is never granted by a young woman without a blush, let her imagination be ever so tranquil.— ‘ You are fortunate to be setting off,’ said Sainte-Lette, in his grave and solemn voice ; ‘ but make haste to return, and ask for as much more !’

During Sainte-Lette's stay in France, his friend de Sevelinge becoming a widower, he repaired to his residence at Soissons, to share his grief, and brought him to Paris, in order to divert his attention from his loss. They came to see me together. Sevelinge, whose age was about fifty-two, was a gentleman

gentleman of small fortune : he held a financial situation in the country, and devoted part of his time to study, like a philosopher who is sensible of its charms. Having thus become acquainted, we kept up our intercourse after Sainte-Lette's departure, who used to say, that, on leaving France, he should feel a degree of pleasure at the thought of his friend's not losing the advantage of my acquaintance. He even begged permission to put into his hands for a short time some manuscripts, which, as I have already said, I had submitted to his inspection. This interesting old man embarked for the fifth or sixth time in his life. An ulcer in his head, of which some symptoms had already appeared, broke while he was at sea ; he arrived sick at Pondicherry ; and died there six weeks after he disembarked. We heard of his death by means of Demontchery. He was greatly regretted by Sevelinge, who continued now and then to write to me ; and his letters, of which the style and the matter were equally agreeable, gave me great pleasure. They bore the impress of that mild philosophy, and melancholy sensibility, to which I have always felt myself so much inclined. I have remarked what Diderot says on this subject, with so much truth : ' that good taste implies good sense, delicate organs, and somewhat of a melancholy turn.'

My father, whose kindness was gradually diminishing, being of opinion it very unnecessary

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fary to keep up an idle correspondence that put him to the expence of postage, I communicated my distress to my little uncle, and was authorized to have the letters of Sevelinge, whom he had seen at our house, addressed under cover to him. My manuscripts came back to me with some critical observations, of which I was very proud; for I did not imagine that my *works* were worth the trouble of reviewing. They were in my own opinion sensible enough; but at the same time mere commonplace that any body might have written; nor did I conceive they had any merit, except the singularity of their being the productions of a little girl. I long retained that modest simplicity in regard to myself. Nothing less was necessary than the bustle of the revolution, the various changes of my situation, and a frequent opportunity of making comparisons in a great crowd, and among persons esteemed for their merit, to enable me to perceive that the bench on which I was standing, was not likely to break down with the throng. I must observe, however, and I hasten to do so, that all tended rather to prove to me the degradation of the species in my native country, than to give me a high opinion of myself. It is not wit that is wanting; you meet it at every turn: it is soundness of judgment, and a strong temper of mind. Where these two qualities are wanting, I cannot recognize any thing deserving to be called a man.—In truth, Diogenes  
was



was in the right to take a lantern. But a revolution will serve as well: I do not know indeed a better touchstone, nor a standard more exact.

The academy of Besançon had proposed the following question as a subject for a prize: *How can the education of women be made conducive to the improvement of men?* My imagination was directly on the wing: I took up my pen, and wrote a *dissertation*, which I sent anonymously, and which, as may easily be imagined, was not deemed worthy of the prize. There was none indeed so honoured. The subject was proposed again for the following year, with what result I know not; but I recollect that, in attempting to discuss this matter, I felt the absurdity of fixing a mode of education, without attending to the general manners, which depend upon the government; and thought it injudicious to attempt reforming one sex by means of the other, instead of ameliorating the whole species by good laws. Accordingly I found no difficulty in saying what I thought women ought to be; but I added, they could only be rendered such by a new order of things. That idea certainly did not correspond with the intention of the academy: I reasoned about the problem without solving it.

I conveyed the dissertation to M. de Sevelinge; but after having forwarded it to Besançon, he sent me nothing but a few remarks on the style. The warmth of composition was over; I found the plan of my production exceedingly defective; and amused myself



myself in writing a critique upon it, as if it had been the work of a person whom I should have been glad to ridicule. This may be compared to a man's tickling his sides, in order to make himself laugh, or flapping his cheeks by way of warming them ; but most assuredly no one could laugh without company more heartily, or more innocently, than I did. Sevelinge, in return, communicated to me an academical discourse of his own writing, on the *faculty of speech*, which he had addressed to the French academy, and concerning which d'Alembert had written to him in handsome terms. If I recollect aright, there was in that work a great deal of metaphysics, and some little affectation. Six months, a year, and more, passed away in this mental intercourse, in the midst of which a variety of ideas occurred. Sevelinge appeared to be uneasy at my situation, and tired of living alone. He made many reflections on the pleasures of a *thinking* society. I thought it to be desired, and we reasoned at great length on the subject. I know not what fancy afterwards got into his head, but he made a journey to Paris, and came to my father's in disguise, as if upon business. The most whimsical part of the story is, that I did not know him, though I let him in. But the great air of mortification with which he left me, awakened in my mind the idea of his features ; I thought after he was gone that the stranger was very like Sevelinge ; and soon found by his letters it was Sevelinge

linge himself. This curious circumstance made an impression on me by no means agreeable, and which I cannot describe; our correspondence slackened, and at last ceased entirely, as I shall hereafter relate.

I went now and then to Vincennes: my uncle's canonical retreat was pretty, the walk delightful, and his company agreeable; but though he had the pleasure of having his house very well managed by Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, he began to perceive he must pay for it by suffering all the teasing, ill-humour, and folly of a conceited old maid. The castle of Vincennes was inhabited by a great number of persons to whom the court allowed apartments: *here* was Moreau de la Garve, an old censor royal; *there* a female wit, no other than Madam de Puisieux; a little higher a Countess de Laurencier; a little lower an officer's widow, and so on to the end of the chapter; to say nothing of the king's lieutenant, Rougemont, whom Mirabeau made known to the world, and whose carbuncled face, and insolent stupidity, rendered him a most disgusting character. A company of invalids, of which the officers' wives made part of the society, amounted, in conjunction with the above motley crew, and the dean and chapter, to no less than six hundred inhabitants within the walls of the castle, without reckoning the prisoners in the tower. My uncle, though well received everywhere, was seldom assiduous in his  
visits,

visits, and saw little company at home. But on our return from our walks, we generally stopped in the evening at the pavilion of the bridge that overlooks the park, where the females assembled. Here I should also have portraits to paint if I had leisure; but time is treading close upon my heels, and the road I have yet to travel is long. I am therefore obliged to pass over a great number of things. Very pretty things might however be said concerning the dances in the robbers'-walk, d'Artois's horse-races, the follies of Seguin, the Duke of Orleans's cashier, whose birth-day (Seguin's) was celebrated by illuminations, and who became a bankrupt shortly after—and then the pleasant walks in the wood, and the beautiful prospect from the upper park, by the side of the Marne, for the sake of which we used to climb over a breach in the wall; and the hermits in the wood, who were situated in so picturesque a spot, and in whose church was a picture admirably executed, and curiously designed, in which thousands of devils were seen tormenting the damned in as many different ways; and my readings with my uncle, especially that of Voltaire's tragedies, of which we were one day rehearsing several of the parts, by turns, when, at the moment of the greatest pathos, Mademoiselle d'Hannaches, who had been spinning in silence, set up a loud outcry against the poultry, to which we should have been glad to have sent her; and our lame concerts after supper, when, upon  
the

the table that had just been cleared, muff-cases served as a music-desk for the worthy canon Bareux, with his spectacles on his nose, and strumming his bass-viol, while I scraped on the fiddle, and my uncle played out of tune on the flute—Ah! I will come back again to those pleasing scenes, if suffered to exist; but it is now time to return home, after having spoken however of a certain great romancer, who had obtained some degree of fame.

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## A SKETCH

OF WHAT REMAINED TO BE TREATED OF;

*Intended to serve as a last SUPPLEMENT to  
the MEMOIRS\*.*

THE manuscripts left with me by M. Roland made me better acquainted with him, during the eighteen months he passed in Italy, than frequent visits could have done. They consisted of travels, reflections, plans of literary works, and anecdotes in which he was personally concerned: a strong

\* In my last sheet I left off at Vincennes: I was going to speak of *Carracioli*, whom I met at the canon's, and whose letters, under the name of *Ganganelli*, had made some noise in the world, although they were often a repetition of what he had written in his numerous little works. But were I thus to go on step by step, I should have a long work to compose, for which the limits of my life would not suffice: I shall therefore confine myself to a sketch.

mind,

mind, rigorous probity, strict principles, learning, and taste, were evident in every page.

Born in opulence, and descended from an ancient family, of the highest character for integrity in the law, he had seen, while a young man, all his hopes of fortune vanish, owing to a want of management on one the hand, and to prodigal expence on the other. The youngest of five brothers, four of whom were compelled to embrace the clerical profession, he had left his paternal roof friendless, and alone, at the age of nineteen, that he might not take holy orders, nor enter into trade, from both of which he was equally averse. His first flight carried him to Nantz; where he stayed some time in a merchant's compting-house, in order to gain information concerning a variety of matters, with a view of going to India. His preparations were all made; when he was taken with a spitting of blood, and was forbidden to go to sea, by the physicians, under penalty of death. He next repaired to Rouen, where his relation, M. Godinot, inspector of manufactures, proposed to him to enter into that department. He determined to do so; soon distinguished himself by his activity and readiness; and at last obtained a lucrative employ. Travelling and study divided his time, and filled up every moment of his life.

Before he set off for Italy, he had introduced to my father his best-beloved brother, a Benedictine monk, at that time prior of the college of Clugny

at



at Paris ; a man of sense, of agreeable manners, and of an amiable disposition. He came now and then to see me, and communicated to me the notes which his brother transmitted to him ; for wherever M. Roland went, he committed his observations to paper. They were the notes which at his return he published in the form of letters, entrusting the care of printing them to some friends at Dieppe, one of whom having a rage for the Italian, overloaded them with passages in that language, by adding those of his own fabrication. This work, abounding in matter, wants only to be better digested in order to hold the highest rank among books of the kind. Ever since our marriage, we have had the intention of putting it into another shape ; but I wanted to see Italy also ; and time and events led us another way.

On M. Roland's return, I found myself in possession of a friend : his gravity, his manners, and his studious habits, all concurred in making me consider him as a person of no sex, or rather as a philosopher, who had only a mental existence. A kind of confidence grew up between us, the pleasure he took in my company making him feel a desire of coming more frequently. It was near five years since my acquaintance with him began, when he first made a declaration of his tender sentiments. I did not hear it with indifference, because I esteemed him more than any man I had yet seen ; but I had remarked that neither he nor

his family were altogether indifferent to worldly considerations. I told him frankly, that I felt myself honoured by his address, and that I should be happy to make him a return for his affection; but that I did not think he would find me a proper match. I then exposed to him without reserve the state of my father's affairs—he was a ruined man. By prevailing upon myself to ask him for an account of my fortune, at the risk of incurring his displeasure, I had saved five hundred livres a year; making, with my little moveables, all that remained of the apparent opulence in which I had been brought up.

My father was still in the vigour of life; his errors might lead him to contract debts, which his inability to pay might render disgraceful; he might marry imprudently, and add to those evils little beggars who would bear my name, &c. &c. &c. I was too proud to expose myself to the malevolence of a family, which might feel its consequence hurt by the connexion, or to the generosity of a husband who would find in it a source of chagrin. I advised M. Roland, as a third person might have done, to give up all thoughts of me: he persisted; I was moved; and consented to his taking the necessary steps with my father. But as he preferred making his application in writing, it was agreed that he should not send his letter till his return to his usual place of residence. During the rest of his stay at Paris, I saw him every day; con-

considered him as the being with whom my future fate was to be connected ; and conceived a real affection for his person. As soon as he returned to Amiens, he wrote to my father, making known his wishes and designs. My father thought the letter dry : he did not like M. Roland's severity, and felt no inclination to have for his son-in-law a man of rigid principles, whose very looks would wear the appearance of reproach. He answered in rude and impertinent terms, and shewed me the whole, when his letter was sent off. I came to a resolution immediately. I wrote to M. Roland, and told him the event had justified my fears in respect to my father ; that I did not wish to be the cause of his receiving farther affronts ; and that I begged him to abandon his design. I made known to my father what his conduct had induced me to do ; and added, he could not be surpris'd if I should in consequence seek a new situation, and retire to a convent. But as I knew he had several debts of an urgent nature, I left him the share of plate that belonged to me, to satisfy his creditors ; hired a little apartment in the convent of the Congregation ; and there took up my abode, with a firm resolution to regulate my expences by my income. I did so ; and curious particulars I should have to relate of a situation in which I began to avail myself of the resources of a strong mind. I calculated my expences to a farthing, reserving a trifle for presents

to the persons who did the menial offices about the house. Potatoes, rice, and dry kidney beans, dressed in a pot with a sprinkling of salt, and a small bit of butter, varied my food, and were cooked with little loss of time. I went out twice a week; once to visit my aged relations; and once to my father's, in order to look over his linen, and take away with me whatever stood in need of mending. The rest of my time, shut up under my roof of snow, as I used to call it (for I was lodged near the sky, and it was in the winter), and refusing to mix habitually with the boarders, I applied to my studies; steeled my heart against adversity; and, by deserving happiness, avenged myself on fate which denied it me. Every evening the kind-hearted Agatha came to pass an hour with me, and accompanied the effusions of her soul with the consolatory tears of friendship. A few turns in the garden, when every body was out of the way, constituted my solitary walks. The resignation of a patient temper, the quiet of a good conscience, the elevation of spirit which sets misfortune at defiance, the laborious habits that make the hours pass so rapidly away, the delicate taste of a sound mind finding in the consciousness of existence and of its own value, pleasures which the vulgar never know; these were my riches. I was not always free from melancholy; but even melancholy had its charms. Though I was not happy, I had within me all the means of being so; and had reason to be  
proud



proud of knowing how to do without what I wanted in other respects.

M. Roland, astonished and afflicted, continued to write to me, like a man constant in his affection, but offended at my father's conduct. He came at the expiration of five or six months, and felt the flame of love revive on seeing me at the grate, where I preserved an appearance of prosperity. He was desirous of taking me out of my confinement, offered me his hand again, and pressed me to receive the nuptial benediction from his brother the prior. I entered into a deep deliberation concerning what I ought to do. I could not help being sensible, that a man under forty-five would not have waited several months without endeavouring to make me change my resolution; and I readily confess that my sentiments were reduced by that consideration to a state which admitted of nothing like illusion. I considered on the other hand, that his perseverance, the fruit also of mature deliberation, proved his sense of my merit; and since he had overcome his repugnance to the disagreeable circumstances that might attend the match, I was the more secure of retaining his esteem, which I should not find it difficult to justify. Besides, if matrimony was, as I thought, a rigorous tie, a partnership, in which the woman generally undertakes to provide for the happiness of both parties, was it not better to exert my faculties, and my courage, in that honourable station, than in the forlorn and ascetic life I was



leading in a convent? Here I might state at length the many prudent reflections, as I conceive them to be, that guided me; and yet I did not make all those that the circumstances might have warranted, but which experience alone can suggest. I became then the wife of a truly honest man, who continued to love me the more, the better he knew me. Married when my reason was matured, I met with nothing that could disturb its serious course; and fulfilled my duties with an ardour that was rather the effect of enthusiasm than calculation. By studying my partner's happiness, I perceived something was wanting to my own. I have never ceased a moment to consider my husband as one of the most estimable men in existence, as a man to whom I might be proud of belonging; but I have often felt the disparity between us. I have often felt the ascendancy of an imperious temper, joined to that of twenty years more than I could count, rendered one of those advantages a great deal too much. If we lived in solitude, I had sometimes disagreeable hours to pass: if we mixed with the world, I was beloved by persons, some of whom appeared likely to take too strong a hold of my affections. I immersed myself in study with my husband, another excess by which I was a sufferer: I accustomed him not to know how to do without me at any time, or on any occasion whatever.

We passed the first year of our marriage entirely at Paris, whither Roland had been sent for by the  
Board

Board of Trade, who were desirous of making some new regulations concerning manufactures ; regulations which the principles of liberty that Roland carried with him wherever he went, made him oppose with all his might. He was printing an account of some of the arts, which he had written for the academy, and taking a fair copy of his Italian notes. He made me his copyist and the corrector of the press ; and I executed the task with an humility, at which I cannot help laughing when I recollect it, and which seems almost irreconcilable with a mind so much cultivated as mine ; but it flowed directly from the heart. I had so sincere a respect for my husband, that I easily conceived him to know every thing better than I could. I was at the same time so much afraid of a cloud on his brow, and *he* was so tenacious of his opinions, that it was long before I acquired sufficient confidence to contradict him. I was then attending a course of lectures on natural history, and another on botany : that laborious recreation was the only one I enjoyed after the employments of secretary and housekeeper ; for living at ready-furnished lodgings, as Paris was not our usual place of residence, and perceiving that every kind of cookery did not agree with my husband's delicate constitution, I took care to prepare for him the dishes that suited him best. We passed four years at Amiens ; and there I became a mother and a nurse, without ceasing to partake of my husband's labours, who had engaged to write

a considerable part of the new Encyclopedia. We never stirred from the desk, unless to take a walk out of the gates of the town. I made a *hortus siccus* of the plants of Picardy; and the study of aquatic botany gave birth to *The Peat-digger's Art*. Frequent sickness alarmed me for Roland's life: my cares were not ineffectual, and served to strengthen the tie that connected us: he loved me for my boundless attention; and I was attached to him by the good I did him.

He had been acquainted in Italy with a young man, whose gentle and kind disposition he valued much, and who, after his return to France, where he applied to the study of physic, became our particular friend. That was Lanthenas, whom I should have esteemed more, if the revolution, that touchstone of mankind, by drawing him into the vortex of public affairs, had not exposed to view his weakness and his mediocrity. Possessed of private virtues, without personal accomplishments, he rendered himself very agreeable to my husband, and attached himself to us both. I loved him; I treated him like a brother, and gave him the name. I could write largely concerning him, as well as several interesting connexions I formed at that era, and who still exist.

Sophy married, during my residence at Amiens, the Chevalier de Comicourt, who lived at six leagues distance from that place, and farmed his own estate. Henrietta, who had been fond of M. Roland, and  
would

would have found no difficulty in obtaining the consent of her family to marry him, made no scruple of approving the preference he had given me, with that affecting sincerity which did honour to her disposition, and with that generosity that made her so much beloved. She married old *De Vouglans*, who was become a widower, and whose confessor and physician advised him to take another wife, although at the age of seventy-five. Both are widows. Sophy is turned devotee again; and is reduced to a very weakly state by pectoral complaints, which endanger a life necessary to the welfare of two charming children. The difference of our disposition and opinions, added to absence, and the cares of the world, have weakened our connexion, without breaking it. Henrietta, always frank, lively, and affectionate, has been to see me in my captivity, where she would willingly have taken my place to insure my safety.

Roland had desired, in the early part of our union, that I should be sparing of my visits to my two friends. I complied with his wishes; nor did I resume the liberty of frequenting their society till time had inspired my husband with confidence enough to remove his fears of being rivalled in my affections. Those fears were injudicious: a married life is grave and austere; and if you deprive a woman of sensibility of the pleasures of friendly intercourse with her own sex, you take away a necessary comfort,

fort, and expose her to dangers. How long a dissertation would this theme admit of!

In 1784 we removed to the generality of Lyons, and took up our abode at Villefranche, in M. Roland's paternal house, where his mother, of the same age as the century, was living with his elder brother, a canon and counsellor. Here I should have numerous pictures to paint of the manners of a country town, and their influence, of domestic cares, and the life I led in the society of a woman rendered respectable by her age, and terrible by her bad temper, and between two brothers, the younger of whom was passionately fond of independence, and the elder accustomed and inclined to domineer.

During two months of the winter we used to reside at Lyons, with which place I became well acquainted, and of which I should have a great deal to say—a city beautifully situated, and nobly built, flourishing by its trade and manufactures, interesting on account of its antiquities and collections of curiosities, and resplendent with riches—a city of which the emperor Joseph was jealous, and which had the air of a magnificent capital; now a vast burying-place, filled with the victims of a government a thousand times more atrocious than the very despotism, from the ruins of which it arose.

We



We used to go into the country in the autumn ; and after the death of my mother-in-law, Madam la Platière, spent there the greater part of the year. The parish of Thezée, at two leagues distance from Villefranche, in which is situated the *Clos*\* of La Platière, is a country of an arid soil, but rich in vineyards, and in woods ; it is the last region in which the vine is cultivable as you advance towards the lofty mountains of Beaujolois. It was there my simple taste was exercised in all the details of rural and productive economy ; and there I applied some little knowledge I had acquired to the relief of my neighbours : I became the village doctor, and was the more revered because I bestowed assistance, instead of requiring a reward, and because the pleasure of doing good gave grace to my attentions.—How readily does the rustic labourer grant his confidence to those who render him service ! People pretend he is not grateful ; and true it is that I was desirous of laying no one under obligations ; but I was beloved ; and my departure was lamented with tears. I have also had some whimsical scenes. Honest country-women have brought a horse for me two or three leagues, begging me to save the life of some individual given over by the physicians. I snatched

\* The word *Clos*, in French, is particularly applied in France to a tract of vineyard inclosed, which is its signification here. It is often used to distinguish the wines of different districts, as *Clos St. George*, &c.—*Transf.*

my husband from the embrace of death in 1789, when all the prescriptions of the doctors would not have delivered him from a dreadful disease without my soothing cares. I passed twelve days and nights without sleep, and without undressing myself, and six months in the uneasiness and agitation of a precarious convalescence ; and yet I was not indisposed : so much does our strength and activity depend upon the heart. The revolution came, and the same enthusiasm seized us both : friends to mankind, adoring liberty, and thinking it was regenerating the species, and putting an end to the degrading misery of that unfortunate class, which had so often excited our compassion, we welcomed it with transport. Our opinions displeased many people at Lyons, who, being accustomed to commercial calculations, could not conceive it possible to favour and applaud changes, only beneficial to others, from mere philosophy. For that sole reason they became Roland's enemies ; and that made the adverse party prize him the more. He was elected one of the municipality at its first formation ; and exhibited in that situation an inflexible integrity. He was dreaded, and calumny on one side took the field against him ; whilst on the other he was defended by impartiality and affection. Being deputed in behalf of the interests of the city to the constituent assembly, he repaired to Paris, and there we remained the best part of a year. I have related, in another place, how we became acquainted

quainted with several members of that assembly, connecting ourselves naturally with those, who, like us, loved liberty, not for their own sake, but for her's, and who now share with us the fate common to almost all who have laid the foundations of freedom, as well as to the true friends of human nature; such as Dion, Socrates, Phocion, and other heroes of antiquity; and Barneyeldt and Sydney in modern times.

My husband made me accompany him in a tour through England in 1784, and in another through Switzerland in 1787: we were acquainted with interesting individuals in both those countries, and continued to keep up a correspondence with several. It is not a year since I received a letter from *Lavater*, the celebrated clergyman of Zurich, so well known on account of his writings, his brilliant imagination, his affectionate heart, and the purity of his morals. The worthy and learned Goffe of Geneva certainly laments the persecution we undergo. I know not what is become of the able Dezach, formerly a professor at Vienna, who was lately travelling through Germany, whom I saw frequently at London, and with whom Roland got into an argument at the house of Banks, the president of the royal society, who used to assemble at his house the scientific of his own country, and the strangers who visited London. I travelled with the pleasure and profit derived from the company of a man who has been upon the spot, and seen things

things with an attentive eye ; and committed to paper the observations I made on every thing by which I was most forcibly struck. I also visited several parts of France ; but the revolution came, and prevented the excursions which we meditated into the southern provinces, as well as the tour of Italy, which I had a longing desire to make. Fondly attached to the public happiness, it engrossed all our ideas, and superseded all our projects ; the passion of serving it was, indeed, the only one we felt. The reader has seen in the article entitled, *Roland's First Administration*, how a share in the government was conferred upon him, unknown to himself, as it were ; nor will his public conduct fail to prove to impartial posterity his disinterestedness, his knowledge, and his virtues.

My father, with whom we had no great reason to be pleased, neither married nor made any very ruinous engagements. We paid a few debts he had contracted, and by granting him an annuity, prevailed on him to leave off business, in which it was become impossible for him to succeed. Though suffering so much from his errors, by which my grandmother's little fortune had gone the same way as every thing else, and though he had reason to be highly satisfied with our behaviour, his spirit was too proud not to be hurt at the obligations he owed us. That state of irritated self-love often hindered him from doing justice, even to those who were the most desirous of pleasing him. He died,  
aged

aged upwards of fixty, in the hard winter of 1787, of a catarrh, with which he had been long afflicted. My dear uncle died at Vincennes in 1789; and soon after we lost my husband's much-beloved brother. He had made the tour of Switzerland with us, was become prior and rector at Longpont, and was nominated elector of his canton, where he preached liberty, and practised the evangelical virtues. The counsellor and physician of his parishioners, and too wise for a monk, he was persecuted by the heads of his order, and had numerous molestations, which, by their effect on his spirits, contributed to hasten his end. Thus, everywhere, and in all times, do the good fall victims: there must be another world then in which they will live again, or it would not be worth while to come into this world!

Blind calumniators! follow the track of Roland, sift every action of his life, scrutinize mine, consult the societies in which we have lived, the cities in which we have resided, and the country where all dissimulation is laid aside: put us to the question, ordinary and extraordinary ..... and the more you see of us, the greater will be your disappointment, and your rage: that indeed is the reason why you wish to send us out of the world.

Roland has been reproached with having solicited letters patent of nobility: the truth is this.—His family had enjoyed all the privileges of that order, for several centuries, by virtue of offices, which



which did not transmit them to their heirs, and of the opulence which enabled them to keep up all the *insignia*, arms, chapel, livery, fief, &c. Their opulence disappeared: it was succeeded by circumstances tolerably easy; and Roland had the prospect of ending his days on the only estate which remained in the family, and which still belongs to his elder brother. He thought he had a right, by his labours, to insure to his descendants an advantage which his ancestors had enjoyed, and which he would have disdained to buy. He accordingly set forth his claims, in order to obtain either the acknowledgment of his nobility, or letters patent of creation. That was at the beginning of 1784; nor do I conceive any man at that period, and in his situation, would have thought it unworthy of his wisdom to do the same thing. I came to Paris, and soon saw that the new superintendants of trade, jealous of his long experience in a branch of administration which he understood better than they, and adverse to his opinions concerning the freedom of commerce, of which he was extremely tenacious, in giving him the requested certificates of his important services, which they could not refuse, did not lay that stress upon them that was likely to insure his success. We therefore deemed it proper to let the matter sleep for a while, and made no further attempts. It was then that, becoming acquainted with the changes of which I have spoken in the curious article of Lazowski, I demanded and obtained

tained Roland's removal to Lyons, which brought him nearer home, and seated him in the midst of his family, where I knew it had been his wish, some time or other, to retire. Patriots of the present day, you who stood in need of a revolution to give you consequence, bring forward your good works, and, if you dare, compare them with his!

Thirteen years past in different places, in continual study, and in an intercourse with a variety of persons—years, the latter of which so closely connected with the history of the times—would furnish the fourth, and most interesting, section of my Memoirs. The detached pieces which will be found in the *Portraits* and *Anecdotes*, must serve instead of it.—I am no longer able to hold the pen in the midst of the horrors that tear my country to pieces: I cannot live among its ruins; but chuse rather to bury myself beneath them. Nature, take me into thy bosom!

At thirty-nine years of age.

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## DETACHED NOTES.

IF fate had allowed me to live, I believe I should have been ambitious of only one thing; and that would have been to write the *Annals of the present Age*, and to become the *Macaulay* of my country. I have conceived, in my prison, a real fondness for

*Tacitus* ; and cannot go to sleep till I have read a part of his work. It seems to me that we see things in the same light, and that in time, and with a subject equally rich, it would not have been impossible for me to imitate his style.

I am very sorry to have lost with my Historical Memoirs, an answer I wrote to Garat, on the 6th of June. Charged with my remonstrances against my confinement, he had written me a handsome letter of four pages, in which he expressed his esteem, his sorrow, &c. At the same time he entered into a discussion of public affairs, and sought to impute the ruin of the *twenty-two* to themselves, as if they had acted, and spoken in the Assembly, in a way that accorded ill with the interest of the republic. I answered Garat with good reasons, expressed in a manner that makes me regret the loss of them ; I represented his conduct as the consequence of that *weakness*, to which I attribute our misfortunes, a weakness common to a timid majority, who were obedient only to the impulse of fear ; and I demonstrated, that both *he* and *Barrere* were fit for nothing but to ruin all the states in the world, by the obliquity of their proceedings. I have never been able to digest the silly declamations of a flock of buzzards, against what they called the *passions* of the *right side*. Men of integrity, steady to their principles, and full of indignation against guilt, exerted their powerful eloquence against the perversity of a few villains, and the  
atrocious

atrocious measures they dictated; and these eunuchs in politics reproached them with speaking with too much warmth!

Roland's retiring from the ministry, very shortly after he had said he would defy the storm, has been imputed as a crime. People do not perceive it was necessary for him to make known his resolution, in order to keep up the spirits of the weak, and that in this manner he encouraged them on the sixth of January: but the sentence of Louis XVI. pronounced on the 18th, shewing the weakness of the sober party, and the fall of their power in the Convention, he had no longer any support to hope for, nor any thing to do but to retire, in order that he might not share the disgrace of other people's blunders. Certainly Roland abhorred tyranny, and believed Louis guilty; but he wished to see liberty fixed on firm foundations, and thought all was lost, when he saw that wrong-headed men had gained the ascendance. He is too well justified in regard to those who are now about to be led to the block! As to every thing else, it appears to me I have been sufficiently explicit in the narrative entitled, *Roland's Second Administration*. His going out of office was the signal of *discomfiture*; and that he foresaw.

My poor Agatha! she has left her cloister; but she is still the same gentle dove, and weeps for her daughter;

daughter; for that is the name by which she distinguishes me. I should have had a great number of persons to introduce into my history by way of episode: my worthy cousin Desportes, who died at fifty years of age, after experiencing much vexation; my little cousin Trude, who has retired into the country, and is now suing for a divorce; our old maid, whose name was *Mignonne*, and who died at my father's house: 'Mademoiselle,' said she, while expiring with resignation in my arms, 'I never asked any thing from heaven but to die in your service: I am satisfied.'—And then that sad connexion of my unfortunate father with the profligate Leveilly, for the fate of whose daughter I felt myself concerned. I made her the object of my bounty, her youth, her vivacity, and some share of accomplishments, exciting compassion; but she debased herself; and having lost all shame, obliged me in latter times to forbid her my presence, while I continued to receive her brothers, and to render them every service in my power.



A

## COLLECTION OF LETTERS,

*Addressed by MADAM ROLAND to the EDITOR,**At that Time Secretary to the Intendant General of the  
Post-Office\*.*

MY DEAR FRIEND!

I HAVE received a letter from M. Goffe, which, I think, you will be pleased to peruse; and have therefore sent it you inclosed. You will learn from it the way in which the combined forces of France, Savoy, and Berne behaved when they took possession of Geneva.

I do not know whether you will agree with me; but I think that the poor Genevese could not pos-

\* I said, in the advertisement prefixed to Part I. that I should subjoin these letters to the foregoing writings of Madam Roland, though seeming, at the first view, to be only interesting to our friendship, because I considered them as a necessary supplement to her private memoirs, and as a standard that would serve to ascertain the merit of that honourable victim of the late tyranny. I am sorry to see such a considerable *hiatus*; for it is in the effusions of a regular and unaffected correspondence that the whole heart is seen, and the inclinations, opinions, and acquirements exhibit themselves in their true shape; but what remains will suffice, I believe, to make the writer known, and to serve as a specimen of the ease of her epistolary style.

sibly have managed worse : one would take them for a company of blind men, committed with their own consent to the guidance of a few traitors, who betrayed them, and whose manœuvres were evident. I was out of all patience, I know not how often, in reading it, and the very idea still makes my blood boil in my veins. I pity from the bottom of my soul, those who could not distinguish which was the wisest way of proceeding, or rather, who had not influence enough to get it adopted ; but it appears clear to me that Geneva, in general, was no longer worthy of liberty—we see nothing like the energy it would have required to defend so dear a property, or to die beneath its ruins. I have only the greater hatred for its oppressors, whose infectious neighbourhood had corrupted the republic before they came to put an end to its existence.

Gosse tells me, the friend who was with him at Paris is of the aristocratic party ; and that he has refused to hold any intercourse with him since the overthrow of liberty, lest the opposite tempers of mind they are in should produce a disagreeable altercation. I would have laid a wager it would have taken place—It is a certain M. Coladon, whom I used to call Celadon, whose only merit is that of being a pretty fellow, and whose servile air, and supple demeanour, bespoke a slave at first sight. I would not give a cripple, of the same cast as Gosse, for a hundred of him.

Virtue,

Virtue, and liberty, have no longer any asylum, unless in the heart of a small number of honest men: a fig for the rest, and for all the thrones in the world! I would tell a sovereign so to his face—from a woman it would only be laughed at; but, by my soul, if I had been at Geneva, I would have died before they should have laughed at me.

February 9, 1783.

I WILL not say, with the woman in the old story\*, *Why, I chuse to be beaten, I tell you!* That would not be at all to my taste. But I must let you know that the word *loup* †, which appears to you so terrible, is a term of endearment, a charming little name, which I have borne, not from time immemorial, but from the day after a certain fourth of February, which took place three years ago. I know not why nor wherefore, but my name in short it is, and I am called *loup* by somebody, as perhaps you may be called *my lovely creature*, by some fair lady, whom, like me, you do not care to mention. After that, judge of people by their words! Should we not be as much in the right to doubt their signification, as Berkeley was to doubt the existence of bodies? But you have something better to do than to listen to stories, and I than to write them.

\* In the *Medecin malgré lui* of Moliere.—*Transf.*

† A wolf.

Yesterday's quiet evening has no doubt set you to rights again.—I have passed the day in working harder than I have done for a great while. Health and pleasure attend you !

March 20.

**YOU** are a good creature, and deserving every body's love. Your letter is full of sensibility and reason ; and is calculated to make you friends among worthy people, who should know nothing of you besides. Good inclinations, prudent projects, just and natural sentiments ; these are the materials of happiness : you possess them ; and no doubt the event will do justice to your claims, and give accomplishment to the wishes of those by whom you are beloved. Among them we shall never be the hindmost.

I have no doubt that a set of instructions, with the lessons in question, would suffice to carry you any length you please ; nor should I ask more if I had leisure ; but I stand in need of a master to fix an hour for that kind of study, and my master is not punctual to his time : he is besides a mere machine, with whom it is impossible to reason, and who can only move his fingers in order to shew what is to be done. I lose all patience, and make but little progress. I cannot even play the music you selected for me, which is in general easy ; but the simpleton likes better to make me study what he is master of himself, and I am obliged  
to

to submit, that my time and my money may not be altogether thrown away.

I believe the people who are afraid lest the fine project for a reform in the administration of justice should fall to the ground, have great reasons for their fears : it would be a very singular phenomenon.

Adieu!—We are yours in all truth and friendship.

April 5.

IT is a nocturnal greeting I send you this time. It is half past eight, and the moment of a country supper cannot be far off; but I can always find time to devote to your service. Do not imagine, however, I am going to tire you to death with an endless epistle : you have no time to lose, and I will not spend mine in a way burdensome to any body, much less to my friends. This principle being established, nothing remains but to come to the point; and that is what I would still avoid doing to the end of the fourth page, by way of teasing *you* and amusing *myself*, if it were not right for such fancies to give way to reason.—The service of this Dame Reason is by no means an easy one.—Whatever truth there may be in my reflection, which you will take for the whim of the moment, you must know that Monsieur Maille, haberdasher of hard-wares, in the *Rue des Lombards*, deals in that famous *dogs'-grafs*, which has so much puzzled the doctors, yourself not excepted—the dogs'-grafs used  
by



by brush-makers, which I, poor ignorant woman, often make use of without entering into an analysis of its nature. But there must be food suited to every stomach ; and people are so accustomed to look for science in dictionaries, that it would occasion a terrible outcry indeed, if none were to be put into a work of this kind, in which, by the way, there is now and then a want of it. Be good enough, then, to call on Monsieur Maille, and, like a philosopher who knows how to extract information out of every thing, for once let a shop-keeper instruct you. You will ask him whence he procures that commodity, what he thinks of its nature, and of the preparation it may have undergone, &c. &c. It is not necessary to teach you your lesson ; for you certainly are not one of those, who, as the poet Sadi says, know not even how to inquire.—In saying this, I do not intend to pay you a compliment ; but to express a truth which flows spontaneously from my pen.

I believe it is now two or three long days since we have been favoured with any thing from you in the shape of a letter. We should be glad to know whether you have received *The Peat-digger's Art* : the desire of the author must have been ill complied with, if the work was not delivered to you on Wednesday last : you were the first person to whom it was dispatched.

We have been very busy these two days in digging, hoeing, and sowing our little garden. We mean to fill it with flowers, not with pretty  
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ones, according to the general idea, but with such as are interesting in the eyes of the botanist. We are doing great things, I assure you!

Adieu!—It is a great deal later than I imagined.

April 14.

IS it not enough to leave the poor women disconsolate, without sending them to the devil into the bargain? Young man, you are not tolerant; but as there is something laughable in your malice, it is forgiven you, and we only infer, that you would rather come in the way of all the *prickly hollies* in the universe, than in that of Madam Maille. After this, very possibly, your friends may beg you to wander about the fields and bushes for information, but nothing more. They find, however, your disinterestedness much to their advantage; and while that is the motive of your conduct, have the greater reason to depend on your perseverance.

Your giving me a description of your laborious life answers very little purpose: I do not pity you at all. In my opinion, to be busy is to be half-way towards happiness, especially when it is a mean of preserving our liberty; for when once we can get rid of the empire of habit, we are little exposed to that of love. Flutter then, at your ease, about the woods and shrubberies, like a coquetish sparrow, yet a stranger to slavery: it may be long avoided by such a way of life, and the mind will gain proportionable strength. I only pity you  
for

for not being able to divert yourself these ensuing holydays, and shall think of you every time we go to take our walk, in which you will be our ideal companion.

April 17.

YOU are sad, and we are quite afflicted at it! Nobody, most certainly, can better conceive how much reason, with your delicate way of thinking, you must have to be so. It is painful to see the seeds of malevolence, or of any thing like it, growing in the hearts of those about us; and a generous mind regrets it the more, when it is owing to some external advantage. It would be easier for such a man to set himself above positive injustice, than to overcome the vexation of afflicting the persons around him, by any superiority not intrinsically his own. That very disposition, however, ought to procure him his pardon for many advantages; and, indeed, it seldom happens, the self-love of rivals and competitors is much hurt by those of which the possessor does not avail himself in an overbearing manner. That kind of discontent that many persons feel at the promotion of a fortunate individual, is, besides, one of the evils attendant on society; and in these cases, a man must resolve to bear what he cannot avoid.

Our friend has written you a letter to-day, which will be delivered by Monsieur de Vin, whose departure for Paris is fixed for this evening. He  
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is an excellent man, of a truly honest and feeling heart, whose friends reproach him with nothing but indolence, which prevents his shewing what he is worth, and availing himself of his talents. But I could willingly reproach him with talking too much on newspaper politics, which tire me to death, and keeping to himself all he knows on the *belles lettres*, of which I am so fond: but every one must follow his inclinations. I am glad you have all those of a sound mind, and all that can satisfy an active disposition. It is having materials for happiness, and arms against melancholy, from which the indolent cannot deliver themselves with equal advantage.

April 23.

YOU have too much soul for any one to reproach you with having senses: it would at least be an absurdity. It is extremely natural at five-and-twenty to forget Aristotle, for the sake of a pair of fine eyes; and it would be very strange, if, at a female tribunal, you were not held pardonable for such an offence. I am well content likewise, to make up all our other quarrels.

I could not help smiling at your earnest desire to see M. de Vin. Your active friendship measures that of other people by itself; but the worthy M. de Vin is the last man in the world to perceive all those little things which interest you, because your heart sets a value upon them; nor do I doubt but you  
would

would learn more from our brief correspondence, than he would by visiting us day after day. I should not be astonished if he were to pass three weeks at Paris without seeing you, although he really desires it; for he is a man likely to spend one half of his life in planning the very contrary of what he will execute in the other: a kind honest-hearted creature notwithstanding, and well calculated to make a sensible woman happy.

Your maidens of Poitou do not at all resemble our young ladies of Amiens. The latter have all the assurance of a woman with whom bashfulness has long been out of the question; talk quite as loud in company; game as soon as they are in their teens; and at that early time of life, play off all the airs and graces of damsels hackneyed in the ways of the world. It is truly farcical; but there are luckily a few remarkable exceptions.

I would almost lay a wager that you are an adept at ninepins. We have already played some famous matches with my daughter; but the little simpleton throws the bowl on one side: in sober sadness, if she never takes better aim, she will be a poor creature; but patience is necessary for every thing; as you have occasion for it to bear study, confinement, and the rain when it overtakes you in the fields. But God be praised! since you still have time left to say a few words on the subject of friendship, and an inclination to retain that sentiment, in spite of the roguish tricks



tricks of the urchin who gives you such mental absences, when you are in company with the Abbé's sister.

Adieu!—We good folks, who have made the voyage of Cithera, love you with all our hearts, and without partaking of your absence of mind.

April 25.

YOU are an excellent man, and we greet you most heartily. Your sensibility, and your goodness of heart, discover themselves without your endeavouring to shew them, in a manner highly gratifying to your friends, and well calculated to insure you their lasting affection. Defend M. de Vin as much as you please: you will give us great pleasure, as you would do him a great deal of good, if it were possible for you to inspire him with activity like your own: it is energy that is wanting to his happiness, as well as to his mind: he is sensible of it, and perhaps would acquire more, if he were always with people whose sensibility might serve as a *stimulus* to his own.

I fancy you would like those to whom he belongs exceedingly. It may be said his family are worthy people, in the full force of the term.

I wish you a Eudora, because you are formed to enjoy the simple pleasures which she affords us, and which we hope she will some day or other more widely diffuse. For our sakes, I wish she may be such, that a man like you may reason in the same way

way eighteen years hence. I should then be almost ready to say *Nunc dimittis*.

Adieu!—May your health be equal to our friendship.

May 5.

WE received your last letter yesterday with much pleasure: this indemnification for the absence of our friends is a great satisfaction.

Are you indebted for the recovery of your liberty in the evening to a decrease of official business, or to the kindness of one of your colleagues? The latter cause would be the more agreeable, as well as the more lasting.

Thanks to your information, we know what to think of the translation of Aristotle. However estimable the work may be, the present edition is above our purchase: we have no occasion for the Greek text, and can do very well without a cumbersome *quarto*. We shall therefore wait for a modest *octavo* without the text, which will probably be published hereafter, and which will suit us a great deal better. I am very glad to hear you say so much in favour of the herbal in question: we shall place that work among those of the pleasing science to which it relates, and which will be one of our dearest recreations, when we shall have assumed the patriarchal style permanently.

I accept your happy augury concerning my little Eudora; nor shall it be any fault of mine if the  
event

event do not convert it into a prophecy. I enjoy at least every moment of the present time by assuring myself that she is in possession of all the health and all the happiness that belong to her time of life: I have occasion for this conviction, in order to congratulate myself on her existence; and I have occasion for it also to assist me in supporting the loss of her, in case I should meet with such a misfortune. My health does not improve very fast. Our friend will almost tell you that I am no longer worth looking at, and that I am withering on my stalk. He is alarmed at my unpleasant feelings, as I am at his growing thin. In this way do we make one another uneasy. Content, and permission to eat strawberries, which Linnæus deems so salubrious, and which, without being of a wonderful quality in this country, are here, as well as every where else, in my opinion, the most agreeable fruits, because they please the smell and the taste alike; an advantage that many others cannot boast of\*.

It seems to me that you were obliged to shut your eyes while consulting the Abbé. But tell me ..... Do those of his sister make war on you in good earnest? Have a care of the winged boy, who strikes and escapes like an assassin! Adieu!—Health and joy attend you.

\* Something is wanting to complete this sentence.

May 13.

THERE was so much agreeable chit-chat in your last, that I could not help thinking we had you sitting by our side. I admire you for placing to the account of coldness what would seem to be the fruit of wisdom ; for surely it is the highest property of it to see no more than what is visible, and to keep reality clear of all illusions : the circumstance that carried you to that height signifies little—so much the better, if, in order to reach it, you had no occasion for efforts and trials : your mind has received no shock, and your energy has not been wasted. Whatever course we pursue, we may go a great length, provided imagination does not come across our way, but remains subordinate to reason.

M. de Vin told us something about the parliamentary satires. It must be confessed that Paris is a curious place : puns and pamphlets are there the result or the cause of the most serious affairs ; and good and evil are turned into ridicule alike, as some kind of consolation for the existence of the one, and the impossibility of the other.

You would no longer then make one in a game at prison-bars ? But if a Sophy were to be the prize of contention in the race, could you not find legs as good as those of *Emile* ? I am not at all sorry for the rain which made you leave off botanizing, and take up your pen ; but I wish you would avail yourself of the present fine weather, and set off on another

other excursion. It is in my opinion one of the most charming occupations possible: it calls forth the activity of youth; favours the reveries of the pensive mind; enables us to enjoy all the pleasures of the country, and all the agreeable ideas it inspires; and affords gratification alike to tender melancholy, and to sportive gaiety. We strolled yesterday along the ditches of the city, and found a few plants; but I am as yet so unskilful; I have so little time to rub away the rust of ignorance; and the necessity of consulting books which are not portable, and which I have little leisure to turn over at home, occurs so often, that I should be out of all patience if my taste for the study did not overcome the disgust occasioned by my mistakes.

Sailly, near Corbie.

I DO not know what is the day of the month: all I can tell you is, that we are in the month of June, that yesterday was a holyday, and that, according to our reckoning here, it is three o'clock in the afternoon. On Sunday I had a visit from my good man, who left me again yesterday evening. I passed a very bad night, and was so ill this morning, that I could not write to you, although it was very much my intention. I do not give you this succession of events as necessarily resulting from one another; but I relate things fairly and honestly as they are. Your letters were communicated to me, because we number the receipt of them among



our enjoyments, and because we cannot taste any pleasure without sharing it between us. I have nothing to send you in return for your news : I do not trouble my head about politics; I am no longer in the way of picking up any of another kind, and can only entertain you with an account of the dogs that wake me, of the birds that console me for not being able to get to sleep again, of the cherry-trees that are opposite my windows, and of the heifers that graze before the door.

I reside under the roof of a woman, whom the want of some object on which I might fix my affections, made me distinguish, when, at eleven years of age, I was in a convent, with forty other girls, who thought of nothing but romping, to dispel the gloom of the cloister. I was devout, like Madam Guyon in days of yore; I attached myself to a companion, who was a little mystical also; and our friendship was fed by the same sensibility that made us love God Almighty to distraction. That companion, after her return to her own country, made me acquainted with M. Roland, by intrusting him with the delivery of her letters. Judge whether what has followed ought not to make me love and cherish the accidental cause which gave it birth.

This friend, in short, is lately married; and I had some share in inducing her so to do. I am now visiting her in the country, which I have often represented to her as the abode best suited to a virtuous mind. I walk over her estate; I count her poultry;

poultry; we gather the fruit her garden produces; and are of opinion that all this is well worth the gravity with which fashionable folks sit round the card-table; the important business of dressing, in which it is necessary to pass half the day, in order to spend the rest in tiresome company; the prattle of *petit-mâtres*, &c. &c. But notwithstanding all this, I feel a longing desire to return to Amiens, because only one half of me is here; my friend forgives me, because her husband being absent, she is the better able to judge of my privations by her own; and although we find it very comfortable to condole with one another, we are perfectly of opinion, that to be at a distance from the *dovecot*, or to be there alone, is a very miserable thing. I am, nevertheless, to pass the whole of next week here: I do not know whether my health will be as much benefited by it, as my good man was inclined to hope. I have, however, laid all study aside for these three days, without feeling yet any wonderful advantage. I was pretty well satisfied with the looks of our friend: I dread his closet, as I dread fire; and the week I have yet to pass here, seems an eternity, on account of the mischief he may do himself in the mean time.

Must I not have great confidence in your indulgence, to entertain you with such rustic prate? I expect you, however, not to be obliged to me for it, but to take it as an act of friendship per-

fectly sincere, and perfectly free from vanity. I am very heavy; and notwithstanding my taste for every thing about me, my fondness for rural details, and those soft emotions which the sight of nature in her simple state never fails to excite in my bosom, I feel my faculties benumbed, and my mind in a state of stupefaction.

I have brought plants home with me from all my walks; and have found out what several of them are: the rest got dry before *Murray* could help me to form a judgment of them. In the mean time day succeeds to day, without restoring me my animation. Women, however, are as changeable in their physical temperature, as the air they breathe: I write according to the impulse of the moment; and it is not impossible that this letter would have been lively and gay, if I had postponed it till to-morrow.

Farewel, and remember your friends. I include a friend of mine in the number, because all our affections are in common, and because you are one of the objects on which we have the greatest pleasure in fixing them.

Amiens, July 29.

IT is enough that you lay down your arms: I do not require you to give them up; I will not suffer any one to impose laws upon me; nor do I wish to domineer. You were not mistaken as to the pretensions of your sex, I will even say as to their  
their

their rights; but you were much mistaken in the way you took to defend them. Neither did you lay them open to my attacks; for it is not my intention to attack any one of them: you forgot the *mode*, that was all. What else is the deference, the respect paid by your sex to mine, but the indulgence shewn by powerful magnanimity to the weak whom it protects, and to whom it does honour at the same time? When you assume the tone of a master, you make us immediately think that we are able to resist you, and perhaps to do more, notwithstanding all your strength. (The invulnerable Achilles was not invulnerable every where.) Do you pay us homage? It is Alexander treating his prisoners, who are not ignorant of their dependence, with the respect due to queens. In this single particular, perhaps, our civilization goes hand in hand with nature: the laws place us in a state of almost constant subjection; while custom grants us all the little honours of society: we are nothing in effect; in appearance we are every thing.

Do not then any longer imagine that I form a false estimate of what *we* have a right to require, or of what it becomes *you* to claim. I believe, I will not say more than any woman, but as much as any man, in the superiority of your sex. In the first place you have strength, with all the advantages that belong to it, and all that it confers; courage, perseverance, extensive views, and great

talents: it belongs to you to make political laws, as well as scientific discoveries. Govern the world; change the surface of the globe; be magnanimous, terrible, skilful, and learned: you are all this without our assistance; and this, no doubt, makes you our masters. But without us you would be neither virtuous, nor kind, nor amiable, nor happy: keep then to yourselves glory and authority of every kind; we neither have nor desire any empire but over manners, nor any throne but in your hearts. Further than this I shall never extend my claims. I am sometimes sorry to see women contend with you for certain privileges which become them so ill: there is not one of those privileges, even to the title of author, that does not seem to me ridiculous in female hands. Great as their powers may be in certain respects, it is not to the public that their talents or their knowledge ought to be exhibited.

To make a single person happy, and to bind a number together by the charms of friendship, and by winning ways, is, in my mind, the most enviable destiny that can be conceived. Let us have no more contention; no more war: let us live in peace. Only recollect, that to keep the high ground you stand upon, in relation to womankind, you must be cautious of making them feel your superiority. The war in which I have engaged you for the sake of amusement, and with all the freedom of an old acquaintance, would be carried on in a more serious manner by an artful coquet; nor would you  
leave



leave the field without a wound. Protect always, that you may only submit when you please ; that is the secret of your sex. But what a pretty simpleton am I to be telling you this, and all the rest of it, which you know so much better than I do ! You wished to make me prattle ; well ! we are even. Adieu !

May 23, 1784.

I CHARGE you with a commission, which you will naturally suppose to be an act of charity, that requires your co-operation. The matter in question is, to take the inclosed ticket to the *Mont-de-Piété*\*, to pay the needful, and to take out the effects: you will afterwards put the said effects into the parcel with our books and other things, so that they may be delivered without farther expence.

Your going to take petticoats out of the *Mont-de-Piété* is an excellent joke ; but, all joking apart, you seem to be come to a critical moment, and to be much occupied in taking a final resolution. It is an age since you wrote to us ; and I am going to send to the post-office before I close my letter, to see if you have as yet given any signs of life.

Our friend is in an indifferent state of health, by no means a pleasant one : a swelled face, a pain in his limbs, shivering fits ; mere trifles, in short.

\* A public establishment at Paris, which lends money upon pledges at very low interest.—*Transf.*

Eudora

Eudora is well; but has not recovered the brilliant complexion of perfect health. Have you heard any thing lately of our friend Lanthenas? I know he has been in the country some time. Adieu! —Ere this you will have received our little matters. Our best wishes attend you.

June 7.

IT is long, my worthy friend, since I had the pleasure of conversing with you through the medium of the post; but I have so much to do, and so much rest to take, that I begin a thousand things without finishing one. The days passed at Crespy were completely filled up by friendship, in the first place, and afterward by visiting, and excursions in the country. Of our excursions, that to Ermenonville was not the least interesting: much taken up with you, and with the things to be seen, we enjoyed the latter, while regretting the want of your company. The place in itself, the valley in which Ermenonville is situated, is the most miserable thing in the world; sand on the high grounds, a morass below; black and muddy water; no prospect; not a single view from the fields of any thing like a rich and cultivated country; woods in which you are in a manner buried, and low marshy meadows: such is the nature of the place. But art has conducted, distributed, and confined the water, and cut avenues through the woods, and from both there result a melancholy

lancholy and affecting scene, pleasing points of view, and parts highly picturesque. The island of poplars, in the midst of a noble piece of water, surrounded with trees, is the most agreeable and most interesting spot in all Ermenonville, independently even of the object that has so much attraction for feeling hearts and pensive minds. The entrance into the wood, the manner in which the castle offers itself to the eye, and the laying out of the water in front of it, compose the next piece of scenery by which I was most forcibly struck. I was pleased to find inscriptions engraved on stones scattered here and there; but the ruins, and edifices erected in a variety of places, have, in general, the defect with which I reproach almost all those imitations in the English gardens: it is that of being constructed on too small a scale, by which means the illusion is destroyed, and they produce an effect that borders on the ridiculous. Ermenonville, in short, does not display those splendid beauties that astonish the traveller; but I think it must please the inhabitant who frequents it every day. If *Jean-Jaques* however had not given it celebrity, I doubt whether any one would have gone out of his way to pay it a visit. We went into the master's room, which is no longer inhabited, and in which Rousseau must have been very badly lodged, or rather buried alive, without either air or prospect. He is now more handsomely accommodated than he ever was while in existence.

ence. He was not fit to live in this unworthy world.

It would be a tedious story if I were to tell you all I have experienced from my leaving Paris to my arrival here. Poor Eudora did not remember her afflicted mother, who expected to be forgotten, and who wept nevertheless like a child on finding it the case. Alas! said I to myself, I am like the mothers who do not suckle their children. I have deserved, however, more than they, and yet I am no better off. The suspension of the habit of seeing me, has broken that of affection, by which this little creature was attached to me,.....Whenever I think of it, my heart is ready to burst. My child, however, has resumed her customary manners, and caresses me as before; but I dare no longer believe in the sentiment, from which those caresses derived their value. I wish she were still in want of milk, and that I had milk to give her.

Do you, whom we count among the dearest of our friends, remember those whom you are no longer in the habit of seeing? Adieu!—I must conclude: we salute you affectionately.

June 9.

I HAVE this moment received your kind epistle, the letters-patent, and the *accompagnement*. It was already my intention to write to you; these matters add

add to what I had to say ; and I know no longer where to begin. Our friend receives proof-sheets ; we have abundance of letters to answer, and to write ; I did not rise till near ten o'clock, because I had passed a bad night ; our good brother\* Lanthenas is come ; and M. Roland's successor is here to receive his instructions : we are all, as you may suppose, in a great bustle, and our time is very much engaged. Obligated to attend to business himself, in preference to epistolary chit-chat, however agreeable it may be, our friend desires me to assure you, that he will shortly send an answer to the academy, to which you have just had the kindness to make him known. At the same time that he transmits you his letters, he will inform you where you may get copies of his works, in order to present them to that learned body. In charging you with a commission, I forgot to say any thing of the money requisite for its execution : in a few days, however, a person will set off from hence, who will reimburse you all you advance. Another thing, assuredly, highly interesting. You introduced me to the acquaintance of M. Broussonnet ; and I recollect perfectly what you told me, and what I saw, of his unaffected learning, of his politeness, and of that amenity which is so strong a characteristic of those whose manners are softened by the cultivation of their minds ; nor do I forget your encou-

\* Brother was the usual appellation by which Madam Roland distinguished Lanthenas, as appears by the preceding memoirs.



raging me to hope that from him we might procure letters of recommendation for England. In that respect I solicit the interference of your friendship, and trust to it to plead my cause with M. Broussonnet, on whom I cannot myself have any particular claim. I ask, however, for these letters with a confidence, which I should not have ventured to assume, had we been going to undertake the journey without having M. Roland in our company: in that case, I should have been perfectly sensible, that not one of the party, and myself less than any, would have been properly qualified to cultivate the acquaintance of the scientific people to whom M. Broussonnet can introduce us. In a lasting connexion, we may sometimes hope to make good humour and taste stand in the stead of learning, even with the learned themselves; but when we only see them *en passant*, it is necessary to be able to pay them in their own coin. Now, as you know our security, I have nothing more to say, unless to beg you will recall me to the recollection of your friend, by saying a thousand handsome things in my name. We are making preparations for a speedy departure; time runs like a thief; the time for us to start also is very near; a thousand things come pressing on us together; and although I am in the midst of my own house, and of my own family, I am only on a halt, or like a fox-hunter at the place of turning out.

I am

I am doing my duty, and executing your commission: the kiss on my own account is given softly on the lips, the place reserved for the friend of our heart; yours I give, where I should have received it, upon the cheek; but very affectionately notwithstanding. Sentiment accompanies them both, *voilà la ressemblance*\*: yours has all the liveliness of hearty friendship; mine, the insinuating softness of a more intimate union: *voilà la différence*, to make use of the words of the song, and all for your more perfect information, and in compliance with your request.

I am not at all like Eudora; your dear little sister has taken a place in my remembrance, and in my heart, whence nobody can dislodge her. Let me know how she is, and give her a kiss on my account. Our friend Lanthenas has so many kind things to say to you, and the other friend, and I so many more, that I know not how to express them all: I am almost *choking* with them, like Monsieur Sage.

Adieu! my good friend; our kindest wishes attend you!

\* *Voilà la ressemblance*, and *voilà la différence* (that is the resemblance, and that is the difference), were alternately the burden of a French song, in a comic opera, much in vogue when this letter was written.—*Transf.*

June 17.

I RECEIVED your moving and melancholy epistle yesterday, without having it in my power to answer it immediately. My brother-in-law was just gone by with two friends, who could not delay their journey to London, where we shall probably be in time to overtake them; my good man was setting off himself, with his successor, to make the circuit of the department; and I remained at home with the bachelor, and all the bustle of a great wash, a thing of no small importance in country house-keeping. I did not think our friend had left you in doubt as to the destination of the copies: there is a complete one of all his works for the academy; another of his letters only for the Count de Saluces; and a third, I believe, of those letters also for M. Lamanon. I have inquired and endeavoured to find out, to no purpose yet, whether there be any uncommon kinds of fish in our rivers and pools: the people of this country possess no more science in that respect than their cooks; and although I intend to make farther researches, I have no hopes of furnishing any thing for your friend's Ichthyology. He will have the goodness not to make the information we send him standard for the length of his letters.

The painter and his mistress who have set every body talking about the pleasures they have enjoyed; the Marquis d'Arlandes, who also publishes with-  
out

out reserve his pretensions and his sorrow; all that multitude of people, in short, who are obliged to say they are happy, in order to be so, appear to me very unworthy of success in their amours, and very incapable of relishing the pleasures of love: much good may it do them! I neither envy nor esteem their mode of proceeding.

But tell me, my friend, where is your reason and your philosophy? How can you see a situation in which your amiable sister may find so many means of becoming more amiable still, in so gloomy a point of view? If she enjoy the income which you expected to be able to secure to her, she will not lose the hope of a suitable match, and may wait for it in comfort. I confess to you, that the *non ignara mali* makes me, on the contrary, look on the situation in question as advantageous, and that is the way in which I should speak of it to the dear little girl, now that the sorrow of the first moment must be somewhat dispelled. But, alas! the sensation occasioned by our own losses, is an evil which a third person can never estimate; nor is it always by the nature of grief, that we ought to calculate its amount! Remember, my good friend, those who love you, who share in all you suffer, who would wish to alleviate it, and who bear your image impressed on their hearts.

Adieu!—I take leave of you to attend to the little matters that call for my care, and beg you to

believe in the truth of my affection. My brother \* desires to be remembered to you most kindly.

You will see what is the destination of the parcel that accompanies this, and will have the goodness to forward it accordingly. I bid you once more farewell, without ceasing to be with you in heart and spirit.

June 24.

YES, we love you still ; and I am confident shall always love you : you must undergo a great change indeed for it to be otherwise ; and you are not made of stuff likely to diminish in value. Receive then, my good friend, these sincere professions, of which I know very well you do not stand in need, and which I only make for the pleasure of repeating them. We undertake your commission with great pleasure, and shall execute it in the best way we are able. Try then and find out some means of forwarding the music that M. Parrault is desirous of sending to London. I should be very happy to execute any commission for him also : tell him so in my name, and assure him of my respect and good wishes until I have an opportunity of doing so in person. You would oblige us much by finding out and letting us know what the *Genera Plantarum*, and the *Philosophia Botanica* of Linnæus, cost bound and new. We bought

\* Lanthenas.

them,



them, but have forgotten the price, and are now about to spare them to M. d'Eu, who wants them. We shall buy them again in our way through Paris, and shall take them with us. I believe I have already sent you word that Achates set off on Tuesday: my good man is going on Saturday to finish his excursion on the coast of Calais\*, and I am to take my departure on the Thursday following. We are all, as you see, on the wing, and are only held to Amiens by a single thread. But Eudora will still remain in this same Amiens; and heaven knows how dear it will be to me as long as it is my little girl's abode! How does your good sister go on? How is her health, her disposition of mind, and her habitation? Say every thing to her in my name, that you can conceive of my feelings, and that *I* cannot express. My best and most affectionate wishes attend you.

June 28.

WHY now, would not any one suppose that it is *you* who are setting off, by your declaring that you will not write till the journey is over? If I had time, I would make you change your note; but, unfortunately, it is also the last time I shall write to you before I go. I am always doing something, and always find something to be done; the

\* The district round Calais.

hours fly ; that of our departure will soon strike ; and then, adieu, good night to you !

I have already heard several times from Achates, whom contrary winds forced to make some little stay at Boulogne, whence he did not set sail till yesterday. I do not send you the famous dissertations, of a girl of twenty, on the understanding : I should be obliged to look for them among a heap of dusty old papers, and have not time ; but when I leave this country, I promise to pack up a few clothes with the trash in question, which you shall afterwards see in my way through Paris, if you still remain in the same mind. That is all I can do for the honour of my word ; but as I perceive it is no joke to give it you, I promise nothing as to the journal. I would rather you should owe the obligation to my complaisance, provided I should have modesty enough to shew you my scrawl : this is pretty plain, I take it ! I am called ; I am in haste ; and embrace you affectionately.

August 7.

WHY, truly, you have a very lively imagination, and draw most terrible conclusions. You did not figure to yourself travellers arriving only to set off again, in the midst of a thousand embarrassments, writing in haste, and saying but a single word, though their hearts dictated a hundred affectionate things. We had agreed that I should write  
to

to you to-morrow morning, for we devote the afternoons to packing up; and certainly you will never divine for what reason I have taken up the pen at this moment. I will tell you at the end of my letter, and in the mean time will give you an account of your commissions.

Dollond, the most celebrated optician in London, speaks French nearly as well as I speak English; but we went to his shop with Monsieur Dezach, and I not only explained your intentions, but communicated to him your own words concerning the diameter, the focus, and the magnifying power of the *lens*. Dollond replied, that it was very difficult to combine those proportions with the effect required; that he had nothing of the kind ready made, but that he would do it in the best way he was able. It took him several days, at the end of which he gave us your magnifier, as the result of his labour, to guide him in which, the properties required had been left with him in English. I send you these particulars, not with a view of proving that I have done my best, for that I am sure you will not doubt; but to console you for what is, by the impossibility of its being otherwise. On the other hand, I have to inform you for your satisfaction, that Eudora knew us on our return, although she was in bed, and though we appeared to her as if in a dream. She kissed me with a kind of gravity mixed with affection; and then uttered a faint cry of surprise

prise and joy on perceiving her father. She had been in great health, and had not met with the smallest accident during our absence; but next morning, while running about, she fell, and rolled down stairs in such a way that I thought her dead, and was little better myself. I found at last that she was not at all hurt, and soon got the better of my fright. In the mean time our friend, for whom the journey had done wonders, found himself much fatigued on his return, and has since been tormented by an unfortunate tumor, which has made me very unhappy. To-morrow I mean to make him take physic, with ptisans, according to the old prescriptions. I never think of him who gave them to us, of the necessity of recurring to them, of my friend, of you, and of all the circumstances this brings to mind, without being much affected. Another perhaps would be silent on the subject, for fear of affecting you also; but I feel I partake too much of what my friends suffer, not to make them partakers in all that concerns me, especially in things that are almost reciprocal.

By way of changing the theme for something more agreeable, I must tell you that while making our arrangements, and packing up, a *Chevalier* desired to speak with me. He was come to see the house, and according to military usage, took the opportunity of paying his respects to the mistress of it. He is a good kind of man; but his compliments, and all the insipid things which such  
people

people call gallantry, put me so out of patience, that I sat down to write to you by way of getting rid of him, and turned him over to our friend, who will not have done with such a chatterbox in a hurry. It is but fair, however, that in all well-regulated families, each person should take his share of the burden, and this is one that I resign to abler hands.

This reminds me of an English comedy I saw represented at London. A French *petit-maitre* was introduced, and occasioned a hearty laugh, in which we were ready to join. I send you no account of a journey that has given me great satisfaction: we will talk it over when we meet, which will be infinitely preferable. We employed our time as you may imagine; I seized a few hasty moments to write, and shall ever remember with pleasure a country of which Delolme taught me to love the constitution, and where I have witnessed the happy effects which that constitution has produced. Fools may chatter, and slaves may sing; but you may take my word for it, that England contains men who have a right to laugh at us. I have it in my power to tell you some curious particulars of Lavater, with whom M. Dezach passed a considerable time.

At length we live under the same sky with you, and love you as much as ever, like true friends, whose device you know is, *far and near, summer and winter.*



August 13.

INDEED you would have been very much mistaken, if you had thought I attach so much importance to my journal, as to have any objection to your seeing it. As I know you will look on it with the partial eyes of friendship, it is very much at your service ; but at the same time, as it cannot be worth the attention of any but a friend, I beg you to keep it to yourself. I take the first opportunity of forwarding it to you. I thought I should give you real satisfaction by annexing to it the observations made in a journey to the same country, by my good man, in the year 1771, and written *currente calamo*. I became acquainted with him in 1775, and shortly after he communicated to me this and several other journals, with manuscripts of different kinds. It was during the perusal of them, at the time he was making the tour of Italy, that I wrote the loose sheet which you will find inclosed, and which, strange as it may appear, he has not yet seen. You will probably be of opinion, that the young solitary maid, who thus studied his character while reading his works, began by not hating him ; and you will not be deceived. But it may appear singular that you should be the first to whom, after such a length of time, I have communicated the opinion I formed of him in 1777.

I was reading at the same period a work of De Lolme upon the English constitution, and would send

send you the abstract I made of it, if it were to be found.—By the way, the author has just published a new edition, which I saw at London, and which I advise you to read as the best book, in the opinion of the English themselves, that was ever written upon their constitution.

August 25.

WITH one leg on a chair, the other foot on the ground, and my arms on the corner of a desk, which is no longer mine, I once more, my worthy friend, write you a few lines from this place. I am about to leave it, certainly for a great while, perhaps for ever; and am happy to mark every era of my life by a particular attention to the duties of friendship. Receive then a renewal of the assurances I have so often given you in this place, and which I shall be happy to repeat wherever I may be.

Every thing is ready, and our effects are in the carriage. It is going to Monsieur d'Eu's, where we are to dine, and whence we shall set off. Adieu!—I am about to increase the distance between us; but it is in order to shorten it afterwards, and in the hope of embracing you ere long. In the mean time our best wishes attend you. Adieu!—We shall shortly meet.

Longpont,

Longpont, Thursday Morning, Sept. 13.

YOU left me distressed and affected beyond measure, at the moment when we were about to be separated by an interval of a hundred leagues; at the moment, perhaps, of taking an everlasting leave; at the moment when, in the effusion of my soul, and with the hands of my husband and my daughter joined in yours, I was renewing the sacred compact of friendship, a compact which was the more solemn, because accompanied by a silence which none of us could break; at that moment you tore yourself away, and fled from our presence!.....I remained motionless on my seat, with my child in my arms, and my eyes, swimming with tears, fixed upon the door through which you had just passed. In what state were you then yourself?

Your image has pursued us hither, and will follow us everywhere; and our souls, steeped in the bitterness in which we saw you plunged, will refuse to welcome the pleasures that surround us, till we are assured that you confide in your friends, that you love them, and that you are persuaded of their affection; till confidence, in short, shall restore the intimate union of former days. Would you, my young and kind-hearted friend, punish those who love you for an act of discretion which their sensibility thought due to yours? Search to the bottom of your own heart, and judge of ours, and then tell me if it be possible for us to be any thing

thing but what we profess to be. Return, my good friend, to the bosom of confidence: it is made for your honest heart. The injury your sensibility did us by believing that we had done you one, was an error of sentiment, proceeding from its excess. Write to us, my worthy friend, unbosom yourself, receive our affectionate embraces, and let us renew our oath of eternal friendship.

My heart is full, I am in haste, and have a crowd standing round me. Adieu!—Come here on Sunday.—Herewith you will receive the translation you desired: the best wishes of our friend Lanthenas, and of *my* friend, and my own, attend you!

Clos la Platière, Oct. 3.

TELL me then, my good friend, what is become of your affection for those who continue to feel for you the most tender attachment, the truest esteem, and friendship the most sincere? I wrote to you from Longpont; and our friend Lanthenas has by this time repeated to you the expressions dictated by our hearts. We flattered ourselves, I confess, we should find a letter from you here, or receive one soon after our arrival, for we wrote to you from Dijon also; and are as much distressed by your silence now, as we were afflicted by your tears. Obdurate man, whose imagination does us all so much harm, why do you refuse to open your heart to truth, to confidence, and to friendship, so long tried? It is in vain you oppose to them  
the



the illusions by which you suffer yourself to be deceived: the frankness of our affection cannot fail to bring you back to our arms. I should, indeed, no longer know what to think of any thing, if your error could hold out long against the truth, and the energy of the sentiments of which, in our connection with you, we have ever obeyed the impulse. Open your eyes, my good friend, and turn them on the worthy people who love you; who could never find any thing but reasons to love you more and more, and who desire nothing so much as the renewal of your attachment. We arrived here without accident, but much fatigued: our brother was come to meet us, and we immediately set about opening trunks, and packing up anew, in order to go into the country, where we now are. I have not the heart to speak to you of any thing relative to the persons I have about me, till you have given me signs of life. You have learnt from our friends that we have seen M. Maret, M. de Morveaux, and M. Durande; and that we have bought your skins, which we have with us, and which we wait for your directions to forward, unless we should in the mean time find a favourable opportunity. The letter written at Dijon was put in the post-office at Beaune, because we set off early in the morning, and did not wish to leave it at the inn. Tomorrow our friend will take this to Villefranche; and I shall quarrel with you in good earnest if he do not find a letter there. Tell our friend Lan-

thenas



thenas that we are well, and that we shall wait to embrace him without flinching. He has certainly been at Vincennes to see my Agatha, &c. I shall thank him for all his care whenever he will add that of coming to see us. Say a thousand civil, kind, and affectionate things for me to M. Parault.

Adieu, my good friend!—Tell me, is it a matter of indifference to you to receive frequent assurances of our loving you as much as ever? My best love to your dear sister.

Villefranche, Nov. 7.

AT length we have received a letter from you, my good friend: on our part, it is still with the same joy as in times past: what is the reason that, on yours, it is not written with the same pleasure and friendship? Be it as it may, you will find us ever the same, and the day perhaps will come, when you will say, that people whose attachment to you had been of an ordinary kind, would not have been capable of taking so much trouble, and so constantly to persevere in it, to persuade you to the contrary\*. What interest, but that of the heart, could be our inducement? You will become sensible of it; you will open your heart to confidence, and will indemnify us by its intensity for that interruption in its duration, which was occasioned by the unfortunate cloud that hangs over your mind. I am perfectly satisfied of it, because a sense of our

\* This seems inaccurate; but it is rendered exactly from the original.

claims on your friendship is inherent in the love we bear you, and carries with it the assurance of being able to bring you back to truth. This is the last time I shall speak to you on the subject. I shall continue our correspondence on that footing which we have no reason to change, and you shall perceive that, so far from avoiding our sick friends, we renew, on such occasions, the sacred vows of friendship, which unite us to them for ever.

My good man is just set off for a circuit in the mountains of his department, and is afterwards to make a short stay at Lyons, so that I shall be ten days at least, perhaps a fortnight, without seeing him. The house is full of workmen; and my apartment is nearly finished; but much remains to be done to the Inspector's study. We shall have things of this kind to attend to for a long while; and I am sadly afraid lest the masons, over whom it is necessary to keep an eye, should prevent our going in the summer to botanize on Mount Pila. Our friend Lanthenas, who left us the third of this month, must have mentioned us to you more than once, and has a great deal to say still, if he means to execute the whole of his commission. My little Eudora prattles more than ever, and I am extremely pleased to see that she grows more and more fond of my company, and will no longer consent to leave me. She called to me to-night to ask where you were, and whether you were not to come and see us. In playing about us she has already learnt a  
part

part of her alphabet, and whenever I take up a book insists upon looking at it. I have had little leisure since my arrival here; for you must know it is the custom to visit the new comers; and I should already have had the whole town with me, if several persons were not still in the country, which prevents their visits from being over quite so soon as they would otherwise have been: besides, my mother-in-law keeps a great deal of company; but I slip away the moment they sit down to cards to our good brother's study, and there we read the journals, or whatever else comes to hand; converse on literary subjects, or concert plans for the future, with so much friendship and unreserve, that supper always comes too soon. I must beg you to procure me Bemerzrieder's Lessons of Harmony for the Harpsichord, in quarto, of which you once bought a copy for a friend of mine; but I am in no hurry; for I have no harpsichord, and it is an acquisition not quite so easy to make. My husband will have other matters to communicate to you on his return. We left the country at the moment when an untimely fall of snow had produced a great change in the scenery around us. If the necessity, however, of making our arrangements had not called us to town, we should have been in no great haste to come here. The news of the war gives me pain, because I always consider these quarrels of kings as ruinous to the people; and I regret it the more, since it gives you particular cause of uneasiness.

Send

Send us an account of every thing new that relates to the sciences, to authors, to the academies, or to intrigues. I should have asked you first for particulars of your present studies and occupations, if your observations on those subjects did not oblige me to wait for the moment when it will be agreeable to yourself to mention them. My best compliments to M. Parault, whom you have no doubt the pleasure of sometimes seeing. We have been long in expectation of news from Amiens, and are almost doubtful of the fate of a parcel, in consequence of the silence of a man who is interested in its contents, and to whom it was to be given by M. d'Eu.

Adieu!—Do not forget those who love you, and whose attachment to you is unalterable. I embrace you in the name of my little family.

November 21.

IN a parcel addressed to us by our friend Lanthenas, I found the enclosed letter to you, and embrace with pleasure this opportunity of writing you a few lines. Happy as I am always in doing so, I frequently repress my desire for fear of tiring you: you cannot imagine the pain this idea gives me! But after all, I am too much your friend, either to leave you to your unfortunate prejudices, or to combat them in a troublesome way.

You must put these sorrowful expressions to the account of impressions of the same nature, which I cannot help feeling at this moment. It was not  
my

my intention to say any thing more on the subject; but my heart overflows in spite of me. I was much affected by your dear sister's letter, which I shall answer immediately. It came to me with the direction in your hand-writing; but not another word. What then is the matter with my friend? Forgive me once more for recurring to complaints: I pardon every thing that proceeds from your sensibility; and you will readily excuse some little effects of mine. I am once more a widow: my good man returned from the mountains, and just set off again for Lyons; my brother-in-law is in the country, directing pioneers, stone-cutters, &c. My dear Eudora has a very bad cold, for the first time in her life: when she coughs it goes to my heart, and alarms and torments me beyond description. The dear little girl remembers you perfectly; but recollects less of your playing with her, than of the state she saw you in at our departure. 'Mamma,' said she this morning, in her soft tone of voice, which already bespeaks sentiment, '*M. d'Antic cries!*' She brought the tears into my eyes also.

My health is but indifferent. I am looking over a prescription that I brought with me from Paris, and making comments on it in my own way. When I recollect that it is for this paper, and a visit made and received on account of a man, of whom I have never heard any thing since; when I recollect, I say, that on such a foundation your friendship has



built I know not what monstrous chimera, I cannot help saying to myself, either you must be very mad or I must be very foolish, not to understand any thing about the matter ; or rather, I neither know what to say, think, or do.

Harkye, my good friend ; we shall be constantly harping on the same string, if you do not recover your reason. I promise you, however, not to return to this again, and I promise you above all, that my friendship for you shall be unalterable : this is what I know, what I understand, and what pleases me best. Take a box on the ear, and an embrace, equally hearty and sincere ; for such is the way in which I must vent the mixture of good and ill-humour that constitutes my feelings at this moment. Adieu !—I long to receive a letter from you in the old style. Burn this, and let us say no more on such a nonsensical subject.

December 15.

I HAD rather you would confess the ill you think of us, than have merely the right of believing that you think well, without receiving the assurances of it from your own mouth. Take us, at least, my good friend, for the confidantes of your sentiments and opinions in every thing that concerns us : we shall be sufficiently satisfied with what we are, to bear every thing you may believe us to be without imputing it to you as a crime. Do not tear the letters you may have written to me in  
the

the fulness of your heart ; every thing that issues thence is as grateful and as dear to me as it ever was. Your error is the effect of a degree of sensibility, which attaches us more strongly to you ; and the cause alone would cancel a great deal of injustice. I understand the state of your mind much better since I have had a conversation *tête-à-tête* with our friend Lanthenas, concerning the reasons you had to complain of the person in question ; but your ideas are not the less false in regard to us. I shall lament as long as I live, a piece of false delicacy which has proved so prejudicial to a friendship I thought unalterable ; but what am I saying ! it will triumph over that obstacle ; and if the silence of a moment (although proceeding from excellent motives on our part) must needs appear so terrible an offence in your eyes, you cannot at least help forgiving and forgetting it, for the sake of friends whose regret well deserves such a sacrifice. The day will come, when you will love us the better for having borne with this folly of ardent youth, and considered it in a proper point of view ; our tears, my good friend, flow responsive to yours. Is it not very strange, that being so well agreed, and so entirely attached to one another, so much should yet be wanting to our happiness ? Until the desired revolution take place in your mind, as I fully expect it will, let me preserve and correspond with the friend of Eudora : you will not visit the sins of her parents

upon her head ; and my heart will be grateful to you for the exception, which, in spite of your error, you are still just enough to make. The friend of my child has great claims on my affection : I will speak to you of her on your own account, and of ourselves on hers ; and you shall find me as sincere, as full of confidence, and as much attached to you as ever. The dear little girl has recovered all the vigour of full health, at the expense of two doses of physic. Is it not dreadful to be so soon obliged to employ these salutary poisons ? But such is the effect of society, and the sedentary life of towns ! Her mind continues to develop itself more and more, and I trust that her heart will be no stranger to soft and virtuous affections.

If you knew how angry I am with myself, on account of an opportunity I have lost, I think you could not help pitying me. A friend whom we had at Rome, came and passed four and twenty hours with us on his way to Paris, where he means to settle ; and I was to have given him the skins we bought for you at Dijon. But his fellow-travellers carried him off sooner than he expected, for his intention was to stay at least two days ; the skins were left behind, and I was angry at my forgetfulness an hour after the post-chaise had driven off. If you knew of any other channel, I imagine you would point it out to me ; but I cannot describe to you the rage I was in.—We talked of you, of Lavater, and of a thousand agreeable things. Mon-  
sieur

sieur Le Monnier, who, if I mistake not, is to alight at M. Vincent's, of the academy, is quite full of Italy, which he has just visited the second time. He is a man of gentle and agreeable manners; is acquainted with Monsieur Rome de l'Isle; and like all those who know that worthy character, holds him in the highest esteem: the children of the arts are allied by nature to those of the sciences.

I hear pretty frequently from our friend Lanthenas, without knowing any more than yourself how his projects go on. Perhaps he does not know himself: he must necessarily be much dependent on circumstances.

I take it very kindly of you to have been at the pains of procuring me certain accounts of Agatha. I do not return you thanks for it, because I place all your attentions to the account of friendship; they are engraven on my heart, though my mouth passes them over in silence. My good man is still at Lyons. Arriving at that place on horseback, he ran against a carriage, and hurt his leg. The mischief, however, is now over; and he writes and runs about at a terrible rate. My health has been deplorable in the full force of the term; but I have been recovering remarkably within this last week, and begin to think myself no longer sick. Say a thousand kind things for me to your sister: I attach myself to all that belongs to you; and beg you to repay my affection to my daughter, if you cannot make a return of it to myself.

self. In that case I shall stifle half my complaints, and utter the rest in a low voice. Adieu, my dear friend! move about, and mix with the world; and may you meet with beings as sensible of your worth, and as affectionate as ourselves.

It is an age since I wrote to Amiens; visits upon visits, and study, and various odd jobs besides, and then repose, which is so delightful in the unreserved intimacy of a brother.....Time flies, and a thousand things are forgotten—You will never be forgotten.

December 20.

WELL! my good friend, how are you going on? In what state are your health, business, connexions, and study? Are all these things as you could wish, as we should desire, and as we could contribute to make them, as far as relates to friendship at least, if our hearts were known to you? But why should I again make a doubt of it? Let us say no more on the subject, but act with confidence in each other.

I have received the inclosed draft from Lyons, in order to transmit it to Paris; and you are the person I have pitched upon, because there is nobody to whom we would sooner be under an obligation. I beg you to receive the amount, and to procure in exchange a good bill, upon Lyons or Villefranche, of equal value. I suppose you will get one more easily on the former town; or what perhaps would be better than applying to the merchants, you may send to the custom-house or  
post.



post-office, for a rescription on me of the receivers of Lyons.

Eudora is perfectly well: her strength and gaiety are as brilliant as ever, and her mind makes a considerable progress. I am better 'also; and am in daily expectation of seeing my good man. We have no news here, except the effervescence in the minds of the Lyonnese, on account of the election of a new *Prévôt des Marchands*, and the intrigues and satires customary on such occasions. The weather is horribly cold; our roads over the mountains are unpassable; and the others are not much better.

Our friend is at present much taken up with the academy at Lyons.—The academy has, as you may suppose, numbered him among its associates. The study is not yet arranged; and a sad thing it is to have any thing to do in so rigorous a season. It is some time since I heard from our friend Lanthenas. He is returned to his father's, and owing to his having a great deal of occupation, is a little in arrears in his epistolary correspondence: he regrets it much in regard to you, and desired me to tell you he would make amends the first opportunity.

Say a thousand kind and affectionate things for me to your dear sister; and as many more to the excellent Monsieur Parault. The shepherd Sylvain has been sadly treated on account of his work saved from the deluge: the *Année Littéraire* has lashed him  
K 4
terribly.

terribly. It is a shame for the critics thus to hurl Jove's thunder against a few wild flowers. What are all your scientific friends saying and doing? Tell me who is advanced to the academy of sciences? and whether M. Broussonnet be still at the door. Adieu, my good friend!—Let us end the present year, and begin the new, under the auspices of hearty and affectionate friendship: I renew that which I have vowed to you, in the fullness and sincerity of my heart.

February 9, 1785.

YOU see I pay you in your own coin; if not with my own hands, at least through the medium of a third person, and that I have sent you *a little quality* also. It appears to me that you *lavaterize* perfectly well with the *Countess*, and that you have a vast field for observation to go over. You ought by this time to be an adept. Tell me then what you have discovered or recognized in our portraits. I wish much to know whether you will divine aright, and more especially what my countenance bespeaks. Your idea of the original is perhaps a little confused: you were not a doctor of physiognomy when you had an opportunity of examining it, and the veil is now a hundred leagues thick; but I shall be the better able to judge whether our portraits be well drawn. Speak to me frankly on the subject: I cannot, however, help telling you beforehand, that either you are a very bad disciple of  
Lavater,

Lavater, or the portraits in question are very little like, if you do not find in them the lines that characterize true friends. I thought I had written you word that our friend Lanthenas was very busy, and that he had commissioned me to tell you not to be surprised, if you should be some short time without hearing from him: he has suffered twelve long days to pass without writing us a line. We have received the two translations of the worthy M. Parault. The first I understand very well; but as to the other, I am quite lost in it: it would be necessary to be able to say with Swedenborg, *I have seen* this same intellectual world. A-propos of seeing—our family is very ill provided with the means: we have all bad eyes. Those of the grandmother, the two sons, and the daughter-in-law, are all inflamed, and we all complain alike of a burning and shooting pain. What is still worse is, that we have not been laughing like you: we are not very gay when we cannot see why, and are almost tempted to be melancholy.

You may make the most you can of this style, one half proper, and one half figurative: I am sometimes inclined to write nonsense, as well as the Countess.

I must tell you, however, in plain language, that you are beginning to grow amiable again; you are a little of the braggadocio nevertheless; but at your age it is pardonable; and then if at a hundred leagues distance one were bound to take notice of every

every thing !.....At the end of the reckoning, and all joking apart, we love you dearly, and embrace you most affectionately. I do not know how you have passed your carnival; but as to me, I am sober enough to edify the whole town; and lucky it is that I am; for the sister-in-law of a very regular canon, who bears no resemblance to those of the capital, is obliged, under pain of public and private scandal, to be very regular also.

Our Eudora, our little delight, grows, and entertains us with her prattle. At this moment she is putting out her little mouth, and trying to kiss us, after having received from papa a tap upon her fingers, which were overturning every thing upon the table. She repeats your name, and sometimes desires to see what you have written about her. You tell me nothing of your dear sister: recall us to her recollection, and do not forget in the midst of changeable Paris, your unalterable friends,

March 16.

EQUABILITY and constancy you are sure of finding in us at all times, and you will one day or other, perhaps, value them more than you do at present. Return to such friends without fear: they will never bear you any ill will for having shewn yourself such as you are. You would wish then for long letters? while I, considering the disposition of mind in which I thought you would obstinately persevere, had resolved to write to you very  
briefly,

briefly, until time should render you such in respect to us, as I always hoped you would become. Glory to heaven, and peace upon earth, if it be true that I am no longer bound to act according to that resolution which I had but just taken! Have you received all the letters I have written you? A very old one, inclosing another for your sister; and one of recent date, with a note addressed to my father.

I send you this time some papers for *M. Le Monnier, painter, at the Little St. Anthony, Rue du Roi de Sicile*. I have been thinking, if you were not desirous of knowing a man, with whom we are connected by the ties of friendship, you would at least be pleased to see an estimable artist, of mild and agreeable manners, lately returned from Italy, where he made a long stay. But why do I express an unpleasant and fleeting doubt, without avowing the sentiment that serves as its corrective? Yes, I still believe that a person who has lately seen us, and with whom we are in habits of intimacy, is for that sole reason not altogether uninteresting to you. Eudora improves in strength much more than in learning and discretion: she is very lively, and very giddy, although brought up alone. She is, in short, a perfect romp, whose violent animal spirits will stand in need of a strong mind to govern them. She has all the intelligence that can be expected at her time of life, and can put up with any thing, even with dry bread, when doing penance.—Beaumarchais, at *St. Lazare*, sounds like a ludicrous antithesis. He  
is



is punished like a school-boy, and will revenge himself like a fox.

I am called: adieu!—I thank you for your good wishes, and conclude like you, *toto corde*.

March 23.

I HAD a great mind to make my daughter speak; but I have too much to say on my own account; and shall content myself with sending you a sheet of paper, which she has scrawled over in her own way. You made me weep with your stories, after having made me laugh with the grave superscription of your letter. Eudora was much pleased to hear that you had written to her. In short, I read her the letter; and when she heard the name of mother, and the recommendation to kiss, she said with a laugh, ‘Why, that’s for me now.’ You have no need of a pardon, I assure you, on account of the matter that makes you ask it. Do you think I stand in need of protestations and assurances as to things of that sort? The two following lines would apply perfectly well to the present case:

*Il suffit entre nous de ton devoir, du mien,  
Voilà les vrais sermens, les autres ne sont rien\*.*

If I had ever any thing to forgive you, it would have been the unfortunate idea, of which the traces are not yet effaced; but my attachment left generosity nothing to do: it enabled me to form a just estimate of the errors of yours, in which I could see

\* Between us, your duty and mine will suffice: these are the best oaths; the others are nothing.

nothing

nothing but marks of its strength, and perhaps I love you better than if you had not done me the wrong of ascribing one to me that I do not feel myself guilty of. In proportion as time shall restore all its splendour to truth, you will perceive that you have lost nothing by the distance you regret, because you will see it has operated no change in the affection of your friends; nor will the pleasure of a friendly correspondence seem to be impaired by a few leagues further to travel over in idea.

You ask me what I am about, and do not suppose I have the same occupations as at Amiens: it is true I have less leisure to devote to them, or to intermingle them with agreeable studies. House-keeping is now my principal employ, and the trouble it gives me is of no small account. My brother was desirous of my taking charge of the house, which his mother for many years had ceased to superintend, and which he was tired of directing, or of leaving to the care of the servants:—This is the way in which I pass my time. On rising, I busy myself about my child and my husband. I make the former read, and get breakfast for them both, and then I leave them together in the study; or if the father be absent, the little girl remains with the maid, while I go and inquire into the household affairs, from the cellar to the garret: the fruit, the wine, the linen, and other details, contribute each their part to my stock of daily cares. If I have any time left (observe,  
we

We dine at noon, and are obliged to be there in decent dress, because there is a chance of our having company, which the old lady is fond of inviting), I pass it in the study, in the labours which I have been accustomed to share with my husband. After dinner we stay a little while together, and I remain pretty constantly with my mother-in-law till company comes. I am then at liberty, and go up stairs to the study in order to begin, or to continue to write; but when the evening comes, our good brother joins us, and we read the newspaper, or something better. Male visitors sometimes come up. If I am not the reader, I sit down modestly to my needlework, and listen, taking care to prevent the child from interrupting; for she never leaves us, unless on occasion of some formal repast. As I do not wish her to be troublesome to any one, or take up the attention of the company, she then stays in her own room, or goes to take a walk with her maid, and does not make her appearance till the end of the dessert. I never pay visits unless they are absolutely necessary. I go out sometimes, though yet it has been but seldom, to take a walk with my good man and Eudora. Bating those little differences, every day sees me go over the same ground, and turn in the same circle. The English, the Italian, and music, which is so much my delight, remain far behind. They are talents and inclinations which lie hidden under the ashes, but which I shall know where to find in order to instil them into  
my

my Eudora in proportion as she grows up. Order and peace in every thing that surrounds me, in the matters entrusted to me, and among the persons with whom I am connected, added to the interest of my child, of which, amid my various cares, I never lose sight; these constitute my business, and my pleasure. This kind of life would be very austere, were not my husband a man of great merit, whom I love with all my heart; but, with this *datum*, it is most delightful. Tender friendship, and unbounded confidence, mark every instant of it, keep an account of every thing, and stamp a value upon every thing, which nothing without them would have. It is the life the most favourable to the practice of virtue, and to the support of all the inclinations and of all the pursuits that insure social and individual happiness in the state of society wherein we live. I am sensible of its worth; I congratulate myself on enjoying it, and exert my best endeavours to make it last. I please myself with the hope that the world, on some future day, will bear witness to my deserving what I once expressed to M. d'Ornay:

*Heureuse la mere attendrie  
Qui peut dire avant d'expirer ;  
J'ai fait plus que donner la vie,  
Mes soins l'ont appris à l'aimer\*.*

My brother-in-law, of an extremely gentle temper, and of great sensibility of mind, is very reli-

\* Happy the tender mother who can say before she expires, I have not only given life, my cares have rendered it agreeable. gious

gious also. I leave him the satisfaction of thinking his articles of faith appear as evident to me, as they seem to be to him; and act outwardly as becomes the mother of a family in the country to do, whose conduct ought to be edifying to every body about her. Having been very religious in my early youth, I am as well acquainted with the scriptures, and even with the church service, as with the heathen philosophers, and willingly avail myself of my sacred erudition, which pleases him exceedingly. Truth, the bent of my disposition, and the facility with which I conform to every thing that is agreeable to others, while it is no violation of honour or decorum, makes me what I ought to be naturally, and without the smallest effort. Keep this effusion of confidence to yourself, and do not answer it, unless in such a vague way as may suit the subject. I am still alone: my good man is at Lyons, whence he will not return till after Easter: he writes that his eyes are getting better; and I have had a fresh assurance of it from his servant, who came here to execute a few commissions, and who is since returned to his master. You may judge by these effusions of friendship, whether I believe in yours, to which I trust for your setting a due value on this testimony of mine.

It was my intention to have said something of the academy, of Beaumarchais, and of that attractive system of chymistry which engages your attention; but I have taken the time of writing to you



out of the interval that remains between my morning business and dinner. I have only ten minutes to dress, which are precisely as many as it generally takes me. I embrace you with all my heart.

Give me some account of academic and scientific matters; and more especially of your own personal concerns.—Once more adieu.

March 26.

YOUR story of the pointed nose puts me out of all patience; it seems to me that mine is not so, and that, unfortunately perhaps, I could at least enter into competition with all the sharp noses in the universe. But you are quite silent as to the portrait, and the *Lavateric* observations which you have made upon the subject. What care I for your skill in physiognomy, if it teach me nothing concerning my own face? Answer me then, speak without disguise, and we will dispute afterwards, if we see occasion. You will find Le M. an agreeable man, whom you would wish perhaps to possess a little more energy; and above all, a little more of that turn of mind that borders upon madness, and that does such wonders in his art. I should be at no loss to find excellent means to justify my delay in bringing you acquainted with him; for in the point of view in which you exhibited yourself to me, I had reason to fear it might look like importunity, if I made too frequent calls on your attention;

tion; but supposing I was in the wrong in that respect, I freely consent to give you this subject of forgiveness, by way of establishing a perfect equality between us.

April 9.

I WILL now confess that I applaud your acquaintance for not choosing to employ themselves for any body but you, and hold myself obliged to them for acting and thinking in that manner. I can easily conceive that your excellent heart makes you desire still greater means of being useful to your friends; but you ought not to regret the want of those you do not possess. Your true friends have no occasion for proofs of interest and power, to make them believe in the return of the tender friendship they have sworn to you. Those friends will always be greater gainers by your availing yourself of all the means that study and philosophy furnish for your personal improvement, than by the multiplicity of your connexions, and a superior degree of influence. Do not then go in search of dinners and *ennui* for the sake of advantages, which it is easier to do without, than to be contented with. If ever you turn your mind to ambition, it will increase with your success, and engross your whole soul to the very end of your career. But enough of moralizing. I am out of spirits, however — my Eudora is not very well: her cold indeed does not increase; but her cough resembles the one that  
is

is the forerunner of the measles: she is a little drowsy, and last night appeared to me to have a fever. To-day I am to take advice. Her father is no better; his cough is no longer relieved by expectoration; and he feels himself stuffed up, and ill at his ease. May heaven send you better health! Adieu!—We embrace you with all our hearts. Say a thousand kind things for us to M. Parault.

It is not true that Eudora has been told not to love you a dozen years hence; but only to hold her tongue about it, and let you find it out.

April 20.

I AM much more easy in regard to Eudora; and without daring to flatter myself she will escape the prevailing diseases, I hope, in case she catches, she will get safe over them. They propose giving her a dose of physic; but as I wish to spare her the nauseous draught, we are at present temporizing. The poor child is sadly altered! You cannot figure to yourself my regret at seeing so tender a little being forced already to submit to disgusting and racking remedies. It would seem that medicine ought only to be calculated to relieve the infirmities of age, or the violent disorders which our physical and moral excesses produce. But that amiable infancy should stand in need of a fallacious art, is a perversion of all order, and a real subject of lamentation. Happy those who in such circumstances can find motives of confidence in a

man of abilities ! There is not here a single physician on whom I can venture to depend. I have however sent for one ; and have got into a fine quarrel with another. We are so alarmed for what we love, that we are always seeking for opinions, without daring to follow our own.—But let us return to the academies, of which you have sent us such entertaining accounts. My good man would wish to know a great deal more of Quatre-mere's Treatise upon Sheep, or rather of Berthollet's, upon *The Theory of Bleaching* : I recollect it is the latter which, when setting off, he desired me to mention to you, in order that you might communicate to him all the information you possess, or may be able to procure, on the subject. He affirms also, you have said nothing concerning the oily and farinaceous seeds, unless that you cannot discover any grounds for a system : now *the tall meagre man, with a tenor voice*, is not at all satisfied with such a result : he will have a system, even if it be brought from the moon, like so many other hypotheses.

The weather is at last grown milder ; but I do not recover my strength ; and if it were not for the activity of my mind, I should bear a great resemblance to the silkworms, when they are about to spin their cocoons, and drag themselves languidly along. I cannot discover that I have any particular ailment, but always feel as if I were much fatigued ; and notwithstanding my endeavours to preserve a sprightly appearance, lassitude announces  
itself

itself by drawing a hollow circle round my eyes. If my Eudora, however, recover her health, and our friend find himself the better for the country, the pleasure I shall feel at their welfare will make me forget my own trifling complaints.

April 22.

YOU gave me a scolding in your short epistle which I received yesterday; and I cannot deny you might have some reason; but I was so taken up with my child, and so fatigued in body and mind, that perhaps I was not very much to blame.

Eudora, though better, is not exactly what I could wish: she is so livid, so.....I do not know what, that I am alarmed, without well knowing why. We have really and truly the smallpox in our horrible house, where we are obliged to have two lodgers, because we are not able to fill it ourselves, although our family is tolerably large. We are here a hundred years behind Paris in building and fitting up our houses, at least as far as relates to the laying out of apartments, and still more in the little matters of ornament: it would seem that we are quite as far behind Lyons, although we are only at the distance of five leagues. True it is, that owing to local circumstances, wood, and all other carpenter's materials, are very dear in this little town, where the principal luxury is that of the table. At the house of every little citizen, who



is at all above the common, more sumptuous repasts are given than in the richest houses at Amiens, and even than in many very substantial ones at Paris.

Uncomfortable houses, a luxurious table, elegant dresses, and continual play, sometimes for large sums; such are the principal features of a town where all the houses are flat-roofed, and where the small streets serve as drains for the privies. On the other hand, the inhabitants are by no means stupid: they speak pretty well, without any provincial accent, and even without using incorrect expressions. Their manners are also genteel and agreeable; but they are a little, that is to say, *very deficient*, in information. Our counsellors are looked upon as very important personages; our advocates are as proud as those of Paris, and the attornies are as great rogues here as every where else. In another respect, it is quite the reverse of Amiens: there the women are generally superior to the men; at Villefranche they are the contrary, and in the women it is that the rust of the country is the most perceptible.

I do not know why nor wherefore I have thus undertaken to do the honours of my adoptive country. I consider it as my own, and treat it accordingly, as you may perceive.

La Blancherie then has got his head above water again? I saw the opening of his rooms advertized in the *Journal de Paris*. Why, by my faith, these  
museums

museums are like the phoenix: they rise every year out of their own ashes. Were you at the sitting of the academy when the panegyric of Gebelin was pronounced? Adieu!—Our males are still in the country, for which they find themselves the better: one of them is to return immediately to the dove-cot: I leave you to guess which.

April 28.

THE post does not set off till to-morrow; I wrote to you yesterday; it is only nine o'clock in the morning, and I have a thousand things to do; but I have received your agreeable chit-chat of the twenty-fifth, and am sitting down to pay you in kind. I need very little provocation to induce me to enter into this friendly warfare with those I love.

I have just received accounts of the male part of our family, by one of the vine-dressers, who brings us every Thursday a provision of butter, eggs, vegetables, &c. Are not these pretty things to put in a letter? but they are of great use in a family; they recall rural occupations to our minds, and in that point of view are very agreeable. My poor turtle-dove is quite frozen with the cold winds that prevail; I shall not see him, however, in a hurry; for his brother is to return on Saturday to confess the nuns, and he must stay behind to superintend the operations of the cellar. All our servants are gone down, or rather, up there; there is nothing but *caps* in the  
L 4
house,

house, and only think of my simplicity ! I have not sent for a single *beau* to divert me. It is not because there is any want of beaux in town ; but they are not tempting. The young men of this place are not agreeable ; and it is no wonder ; for the women do not understand their business. Travels, and observation, are necessary to give them a polish ; and accordingly they return home more amiable men ; while the women remain in their corner, with their little airs and graces, by which nobody is imposed upon.

I believe my experience would be of great use to your *Lavaterian* knowledge, if I were to enlighten your observations on the face which you are studying, and of which the lips displease you. Nature has made her good, and has endowed her, not with wit, but with sound sense : her faculties are not enlarged, or improved by education ; nor must you expect to find in her either ideas above the common, or taste, or delicacy, or that exquisite sensibility that proceeds from an organization peculiarly happy, or from a well-cultivated mind. Add to this on one hand, that ease of manners which a knowledge of the world generally confers ; and on the other, an inclination to command, and the habit of doing so, though without knowing how to keep people properly in their places, or, if you will, in their ranks, and you have the key of every thing. The result of all is a tolerably agreeable companion, with whom every one is at his ease ;

ease ; a woman truly estimable, because her heart is perfectly honest, although she is a little wanting in dignity ; and a person worth knowing, because she does not exact too much, and does justice to herself, as well as to others.

With these *data*, study and improve. If we were making our observations together, I have the modesty to think my inspiration would assist your science: there are things which you cannot get hold of but by dint of labour, and others concerning which I might say of you, and of almost all other men, what Clara said of Volmar: ‘ He might have swallowed all Plato, and all Aristotle, without being able to divine it.’

The day before yesterday, Eudora took a dose of kermes, with a strong infusion of burrage and syrup of violets. Her cough is entirely gone ; but she cannot be said to be entirely recovered: she is as full of mischief as a monkey: my brow is knit like that of a pedant in a college, and I am quite hoarse with scolding her. I was just now horribly scandalized at hearing the brat utter a great oath, and insisted on knowing where she picked it up: ‘ Lord, Mamma, Saint-Claude says so as well as I.’—Saint-Claude, one of our servants, is an honest fellow, who takes care never to swear in my presence ; but makes amends for it, I dare say, when I am out of the way. What admirable aptitude ! She does not pass an hour in a fortnight

fortnight with the servants ; nor do I ever stir a step without her.

May 7, or 8.

I SHOULD be very happy to have a little conversation with you, although your projects\* have struck me dumb for several days. I am now in great haste ; and can only say a few words, by way of announcing to you, that the Inspector will write immediately, in answer to several particulars of your letter.

I dare not express my sentiments to you concerning your intended voyage ; for it would be impossible for my observations to be disinterested. With the strongest desire to talk the matter over like an indifferent person, my sorrow, at the idea of so long an absence, would be busy unknown to me.

If you had a nearer prospect of promotion in your office, I should contend with advantage. You have activity enough for the enterprise which tempts you ; but you have not that iron constitution which seconds the energy of the mind, and fits a man to encounter the hardships of such a voyage. I know we have a right, even at the risk of our lives, to run hazards that may have a fortunate event : it is a lottery, in which sentiment holds the balance

\* I had been appointed naturalist to attend La Peyrouse in his voyage round the world.

and



and regulates reason; but friends have a different compass to steer by: their mind approves while their heart is repugnant: they have nothing then to do, but to be silent. This is what we are reduced to, while weeping like children, whenever you are the subject of our conversation. Why does not content retain in the same place, those whom friendship connects so closely with one another?—Eudora is better. Our friend Lanthenas desired me to say a thousand kind things for him; but he must have written to you himself since he commissioned me to do so.

Adieu!—I have half a mind to be angry with you on account of the pain you give me; but the thing is not possible; and so I am forced to embrace you.

May 18.

AND I also take upon me to send you plants; not to make experiments in dying; but to know their names; and to give you an idea of the *Flora* of this country. I am become grossly ignorant on the subject; and have so many things to do, that I prefer your telling me what they are, to spending my time in looking for them in books. The lichen, or moss, in my little parcel, was gathered from the walls of a fountain, whither Eudora often goes to rest herself, and to drink the excellent water it contains. This fountain is called Belle-Roche, from the domain in which it is situated; a domain, with  
a little

a little château, in the possession of the dean of this chapter, with whom we passed the whole of yesterday. The yellow flower belongs to a thorny shrub, very common in the woods round the town, and said to be good for cattle when the thorns fall off, which happens by degrees as the flower fades away. The two other little plants were formerly of my acquaintance; nor is any thing more common in the woods. I had them once at my fingers ends; but have forgotten them, and should like to know what they are, without being obliged to learn them over again: so tell me quickly their names, surnames, class, genus, &c.

La Blancherie then has opened his rooms when I am no longer at Paris, and when I was going to Amiens *parimente*. As to the last article, it signified little; but I am sorry not to have seen those famous rooms before I removed to such a distance. Adieu! —Good night, or good morning: I am in haste, and going away.

Lyons, June 19.

YESTERDAY evening, on coming home, we found your letter of the thirteenth; and although I have little time to spare, and although you have ere this received one of ours, informing you of our proceedings, and consequently accounting for our silence, I cannot resist the longing desire I feel to answer the kind expressions of your anxious friendship.

I long

I long ago perceived the slackness of my correspondence, and have been desirous of an opportunity of making amends, by writing with the leisure so dear to sensibility. Household affairs, and occupations in the study, have so taken up my time, that my little excursion was delayed by them, notwithstanding the speed with which I hastened to bring them to a conclusion. Though we have been here some days, time passes away, as you know it does on a journey, when we have only a few minutes to ourselves, which we endeavour to employ to the best advantage.

We have taken up our abode in an apartment which my good friend hired for himself, and with which the whole of our little family can make shift upon occasion. I have brought with me our Eudora, the maid, and a man servant; and every thing goes on to our perfect satisfaction. We are in a handsome house, and in a good quarter of the town, quite close to the hotel of the Intendant (*l'Intendance*), though very far from our acquaintance; but the most distant of them lends us his carriage, of which I make as much use as I please. I went yesterday to see Mademoiselle St. Huberti in Dido, her favourite part, which I had never seen her play at Paris: I thought her sublime. Our friend has a great deal of business on his hands: a compliment to the academy as an associate; another sitting at the agricultural society, to which he also belongs; professional cases; and information to be obtained  
for.

for the continuation of his labours in the Encyclopedia. If he were to stay here three months, he would find sufficient employment, ; and I could stay as long without being tired of the place. I have taken a master for the forte-piano, and study music every morning, but little, it is true ; for visits, dinners, &c. engross a great part of my time. The other day I met *M. Jussieu*, the younger, at his sister's, whom I was visiting, and whose husband has a very excellent cabinet of natural history.

Eudora gave me some uneasiness yesterday. She seemed to have a slight attack of a fever ; but is pretty well this morning.

We shall receive your Persian traveller with a twofold interest : if he had only the recommendation of having seen a great part of the world, he would be welcome : what will he be as your friend !

Write us longer letters. I had a thousand things to say to you about your last revolution, which prevents our losing you ; but it is precisely on the things of which the heart is the fullest, that we keep silence, when we have not time to express the whole of what we feel. If you could not, however, divine the greatest part of it, you would not deserve an explanation. Believe me, of all those to whom you are dear, nobody is more happy than ourselves at your being preserved from the great hazards, which we do not love to see those persons  
run,

run, to whom we have, in a manner, attached our existence.

Adieu, my friend!—We embrace you with all the frankness, and all the unreserve, of that tender friendship which we have sworn to maintain to the end of our lives.

Villefranche, July 4.

WE returned two days ago, and have been ever since in a great bustle. We are employed in a variety of things; in letter-writing, and several others that have got a little into arrears, and in household affairs, which call for my accustomed vigilance, to say nothing of those little troubles, of which every one in this world has his share.

I am far from enjoying that agreeable tranquillity in which it is a pleasure to hold converse with our friends, especially when they are in the disposition and circumstances you are in at present. I should wish to talk with you at my ease, concerning the hazards and the advantages of the two situations, between which you have made a choice; concerning the folly of consuming life in vain regret, when we had good reasons for our determination; and concerning the inanity of that glory for which we make such sacrifices, which almost always betrays us, and never leads to repose; the end every one has in view, and which he is only endeavouring, though generally to no purpose, to render more comfortable. I should wish to put into your head  
a few



a few more grains of philosophy, in exchange for that excess of active heat, which produces good effects, and great torments. I think all this, administered by the kind hand of friendship, might be of some use to you, and certainly would be a very agreeable office to me; but a thousand things press on me together, and the tide of time carries me away.

I add to this a flower with which I am unacquainted, and which, for want of the *Genera*, I cannot make out. It has eight stamina; the plant is herbaceous, and six inches high, more or less. The flowers proceed from the *axillæ* of the leaves; are borne by a *petiolus* enlarged at the base, and grow up along the stalk, at the top of which they meet in a cluster.

August 2.

HERE I am at last, having before me the half hour it wants to dinner-time, and meaning to devote that space of time to your service, that you may not repeat, 'It was well worth while to retire into the country.'

You must know, in the first place, the day before yesterday I was dying, yesterday I was in a languishing state, and to-day I am as gay as a lark.

Ask me why? I cannot tell; but so it is; and if any one will figure to himself a continual succession of great activity, and of extreme languor, he will have

have a complete idea of my health. My good man has taken to spectacles, as, perhaps, I have already told you: his eyes are better, without being perfectly well. He has been bathing for some days; but business upon business comes incessantly to harass him; sometimes it is the blind and groping administration, building up with one hand, pulling down with the other, and always asking for advice, without ever taking it; sometimes the academies, to which he must address some elaborate composition or other, at the time perhaps when least inclined; sometimes it is a useful connexion; sometimes a friendly correspondence which must be kept up with equal care; and then the great work above all, the continuation of the Encyclopedia, to which it is become necessary to return. You may expect in consequence to be tormented like a poor soul in purgatory. Heavy complaints are already made of you, because you no longer speak to M. Audran; because you appear to neglect him, &c. You must see him, follow him up, hurry him, get a great many things from him, urge him for a great many more, and so on. You have had memorandums of questions concerning furs; try to procure answers to them, and send them to us; for we are thinking in good earnest of that important work. Every wheel must be put in motion, every engine must be set to work, to collect and complete the materials: take your measures accordingly; join your love for the sciences to your friendly zeal, and serve us, as you are so well able to do.

I have another thing to beg of you, Mr. Naturalist, Chemist, &c. and that is, that you will employ your talents for the good of mankind. You must know that we have vipers in the *Cloſe*, and that a child of twelve years of age was lately bitten by one, and died in leſs than four-and-twenty hours. Find out a *certain and eaſy* remedy, which we may always have at hand, and even carry about us. It will be rendering a ſervice to the world, and, perhaps, to your friends. On my firſt viſit to this place, five years ago, we found in our own little domain, near the houſe, a viper, which my Roland killed, even though he was without his *durindana*\*; I have now a Eudora, who may ſlip away from me into the garden, and may meet with that terrible reptile under the graſs, in ſome unfrequented walk. —Good heavens! my heart fails me, and I deteſt the *Cloſe*! It is very true, I aſſure you: more reaſons than one put us out of humour with this country-houſe; we have laid aſide the idea of rebuilding it; and if you, who know every thing, ſhould chance to hear of a ſnug box to be ſold, with a good garden, good water, a fine proſpect, and pleaſant grounds about it, near Villefranche, or on the road between this and Lyons, pray let us know, that we may make the purchaſe. Now, is it not a fine piece of folly to deſire you to look out

\* The ſword of the famous Orlando, who in French is called *Roland*.—*Transf.*

for such a thing? It is because, to our sorrow, it is a thing very scarce, and very hard to come at.

So, poor Lanthenas is at liberty again? We shall see him I hope ere long: I am heartily rejoiced at it. My poor Eudora grows thin, and wastes away, without my knowing to what to attribute it. I fancied our water was not good, and sent to fetch some from a fountain without the town. I next supposed she had worms, and gave her a vermifuge mixed up with honey, and afterwards lemon-juice and oil. They operated violently, without her voiding any worms, unless something that looked like a small one, about which I am not sure. Her tongue is loaded, her breath has a faint and bilious smell, her complexion is pale and wan, her eyes are hollow, and her flesh is flabby; but she is still gay and lively, and very gentle and patient when in pain. This is her present state; and this it is that torments me, and breaks my heart. While my uneasiness on her account quite wears me out, I am teased and tormented by other cares; and in the midst of all this, I have sometimes the courage of a lion, and sometimes I weep like a child. Adieu.—I wish you health, strength, peace, and happiness: we embrace you with all our hearts.

August 8.

I AM going, Sir, to begin my day with you, by order of my lord and master, who gave me your

letter the moment I awoke. It is ten o'clock however; but I bathed at seven, went to bed again, and enjoyed that sound and refreshing sleep which is so necessary to health. I was yesterday at a ball given by one of our lodgers, and danced two cotillons. Take notice, that it was the first time I had danced since two years before my marriage. I found that a relish for that agreeable exercise is not so speedily lost; and notwithstanding my matron-like age of one-and-thirty, I was rather induced to withdraw at midnight by prudence, than by satiety.

I do not know what to make of the story you tell me of your man of a superior kind: do I know him, or do I not? It appears to me hardly possible to receive his homage at my feet on the first interview, if I have not beforehand some notion of what he is. In good truth, you have no pity for a poor rustic, whose imagination naturally grows cold under the influence of every thing around her. I do not mean that our country ladies are more scrupulous than those of your great town; but for my part, I think our country gentlemen stupid; and if I had not been already virtuous from habit and principle, I should have been made so by disgust, or the want of knowing how to better myself. In sober sadness, there is nothing here to make it worth while to lose the honour of the field. Accordingly my habits are formed, and your wonderful man will not make me change them:



them: so much the worse for him, if he is not satisfied. But if he be a traveller, by the diligence, the notice you have given us will be altogether useless: that carriage does not stop on the road; if otherwise, I expect to see some good sort of a man in your own way.

I send you a plant, which from its first appearance I took for a kind of valerian; but I think I can discover a specific difference. It is very common here on the banks of a beautiful little river. Adieu!—I have at this moment old father *Renard* by my side. He tells me his son has seen you three times; but you are so busy, that he is afraid of being troublesome. Farewell! Our best wishes attend you.

August 19.

WHILE you were dining with your literati, we were at dinner here with the widow of an academician, and with counts and countesses of the neighbourhood, as well *sacred* as *profane*; for among them was a canoness and a count of Lyons\*: only think what holy personages! The widow is the relict of the Count de Milly, and rejoices with reason at her widowhood.—If you are not acquainted with her history, I will treat you with it on some future day. We had not an interesting

\* The counts of Lyons constituted a noble order of religious.—*Trans.*

*hortus siccus* to visit, like that which made you so happy; but we had officers with us, who were both polite and tolerably well informed, a thing too uncommon among military men, not to be very agreeable; and we concluded the day by taking a walk to a *vogue*: such is the name given here to certain festivals, to celebrate which, the populace assemble in the country, and dance and drink in a meadow to their hearts' content. In one place are fiddles; fifes in another, and a bagpipe in a third. Those who have no instruments make amends with their voices; others sit under tents, and guzzle new wine as sour as that of Surenne; and sometimes the fair ladies make up a country dance. But to return to our own affairs; you are a perfect romancer; a great promiser of nothings; you always announce people who never come. It was well worth while to make my mouth water for a *quiesbet* \*! Three times we have already calculated, and waited impatiently for the moment, when, according to the notice you gave us, some great personage was to arrive; nobody has yet appeared. I console myself, however, for the non-arrival of the gallant you have found out for me, since I have been informed that he is only fifteen: he would want tutoring, and I am not old enough to undertake his education, or

\* This is some cant word, neither in common use in France, nor to be found in a dictionary. It is in italics in the original French — *Transf.*

to seek my fortune among school-boys. I am not afraid, let me tell you, Sir, to encounter a connoisseur. I wish to heaven I had you in England: you would fall in love with all the women. I was very near doing so, although a woman myself. They bear no resemblance to ours; and have in general that oval form of countenance which Lavater commends. I am not at all surprised that a man of sensibility, who has seen the English women, should feel a longing desire to visit Pennsylvania. Take my word for it, that the individual who does not feel some esteem for the English, and a degree of affection mixed with admiration for their women, is either a pitiful coxcomb, or an ignorant blockhead, who talks about what he does not understand.

As to you, Sir, you are an impertinent fellow, and a coxcomb too; for I only suspected it to be *valerian* by its manner of growing; but the very great specific differences convinced me it was another plant, and made me ask you the name. The inference may be easily drawn. You are much mistaken, if from this sportive style you suppose me to be in good spirits. I am heartily vexed, as you will easily believe when I add, that I am not to go into the country at all this year; and that I shall see no more of *the Clove* than yourself. The only difference is, that I shall eat some of the fruit; but they must be brought two long leagues; their

bloom will be gone off; and, besides, they will not be gathered by my own hands.

I shall conclude with this lamentation, wishing you all joy and health.

August 27.

THE post does not set off till the day after to-morrow; but I have a few moments of leisure, and hasten to tell you, that you have not the merit of being the first person from whom I heard of La Blancherie. I had already been told that he was at Lyons, and from that moment made no doubt but he was the man of whom you meant to speak. I am, however, very glad to find that you did not mention Mademoiselle Philipon to him. His negligence appears to me the more excusable. *How very modest I am!* But what I have to tell you is, that La Blancherie having waited upon M. de Villers the director of the academy of Lyons, in order to request he would take him to a sitting, that gentleman asked him, out of attention and politeness, whether he should like to become a member. ‘No,’ said La Blancherie, ‘*I ought not to belong to any academy.*’—‘And why so, pray?’—‘*Because, if I did, I should be obliged to belong to all the academies in Europe.*’ The grave M. de Villers, who is possessed of both energy and spirit, contented himself with replying, ‘You told me, Sir, that you were to dine with M. —: you may beg him to conduct



duct you to the academy also.' At a sitting of ours, I met two or three men of merit from Lyons, who all agreed in saying, that La Blancherie is a most unsufferable coxcomb. Between ourselves, I was not much surpris'd at hearing it; for ten years ago he seem'd to have a turn that way, which so great a length of time employed in intriguing in the world, cannot fail to have wonderfully improved.

Let us return to our academical sitting, which was very agreeably fill'd up, in the opinion of every body present. I give you their testimony, because my own might appear suspicious to you, in two different points of view. In the first place, my good man read a discourse that was much applauded, upon *the influence of the cultivation of letters in the provinces, compared with their influence in the capital*. There was a good deal in it concerning the women, which several present had good reason to apply to themselves, and they would tear my eyes out, perhaps, if they imagin'd that I had any share in the production.

The director entertain'd us with an account of the discoveries of the present age; and a stranger very agreeably explain'd his opinion, that plants are not destitute of sentiment. This author is a Swift, settl'd at Lyons, and a protestant minister. He is arriv'd from England, after taking a doctor's degree at Oxford, and is lately married to a young woman of eighteen, who is a native of Sedan, and whom he brought with him. We kept them  
with



with us the day after the sitting, and became very intimate. A high-vicar of Lyons, whom we knew before, read some pieces of excellent criticism, translated from the German. The secretary recited an epistle in very pleasing poetry, congratulating our friend on his return to his country, accompanied by a helpmate, of whom the poet spoke as poets are accustomed to do. It is pretty certain this did not tend to recommend me to the favour of the women. Not daring, however, to say any thing against it, they would fain have it in their power to criticise the discourse of an academician, whose wife was the subject of a public panegyric. But, unfortunately, although it contains some severe truths that regard them, the language is exceedingly polite, and even elegant.

Now for a word or two of your Messieurs Ducis and Thomas, who are at Lyons, and who puff each other off like the two asses in the fable. The latter has thought proper to print some poetry, addressed to Jeannin, whom you know, and whom every body ridicules. In his verses, the academician praises the charlatan in the most extravagant terms, and to make the matter more moving, has inserted an episode about Ducis, who in passing the mountains of Savoy in an old crazy carriage was overset, and frightened out of his wits. Thomas sees in his brother academician the Sophocles of France, whose furious horses are dragging him along like Hippolitus, and dashing his chariot to pieces. A country

try gentleman, tired of this learned jargon, and sick of such fulsome flattery, has answered him in verses which I inclose, sincerely regretting that I cannot join in your opinion concerning my countrymen; but if the judges of your Parnassus make such blunders, how will you defend the herd of our *badauds* \* ? Independently of the bad subject chosen by Thomas, his verses are not even worthy of a writer of panegyric. These, however, are the great men who are to shine on Tuesday at the public sitting at Lyons, where one of them is to read a canto of his *Petreide*: you will have an account of it from La Blancherie, who is to return immediately. I do not imagine he has met with many subscribers at Lyons.

October 12.

WELL, my good friend! how do you do? It is a long time since I wrote to you; but the truth is, that for this month I have scarcely taken up my pen. I verily believe I am imbibing some of the inclinations of the beast whose milk is restoring me to health. I am growing *asinine* by dint of attending to the little cares of a *piggish* country life. I am preserving pears, which will be delicious; we are drying raisins and prunes; are in the midst of a great wash, and getting up the linen; make our

\* The Parisians are called *badauds* in derision, as our Londoners are called cockneys.—*Transf.*

breakfast

breakfast upon wine, and lie down upon the grass to let the fumes of it go off; overlook the people who are busied in the vintage, and rest ourselves in the woods and meadows; knock down walnuts, and after gathering our stock of fruit for the winter, spread it in the garrets. Heaven knows how we make the doctor work!—You make us kiss him! Upon my word, you are a strange sort of creature.

We were much entertained by the charming narrative you sent us. You ought, indeed, to be always moving about for the amusement of your friends, particularly that you may not forget to pay them a visit.

Adieu!—There is a talk about breakfasting, and going afterwards in a body to gather almonds.

*The Close, October 15.*

YOU see I am still here, whither I came for a week, and where I shall probably make a stay of two months. Economical arrangements had guided us in our first resolution: our moral and physical welfare make us change our minds. Our mother, it is true, lives at as great an expence during our absence, as if we were with her, and strangers occupy our places at table; but what then? We are here in the asylum of peace and liberty; we no longer hear a scolding tongue going from morning to night; nor do we any longer behold a forbidding countenance, in which a want of feeling and jealousy

lously are depicted by turns, and in which spite and anger are perceptible through the disguise of irony, whenever we meet with any success, or receive any marks of attention. We breathe a pure air, and can obey the dictates of friendship and confidence, without fearing to irritate by the manifestation of those sentiments, a hard heart, which was never acquainted with them, and which hates to see them in others. In a word, we can be busy, we can employ ourselves, or pass our time in soft dalliance, without the disagreeable assurance, that whatever we do will be blamed, criticised, misconstrued, &c.

These advantages are certainly worth a pecuniary sacrifice. It is impossible, however, to make such a bargain all the year round, without an absolute rupture; and for that purpose it was not worth while to meet. Well! have I told you enough this time? Do you believe I am still your friend? You may also believe, though I have the same affection for you as ever, I should never have spoken to you, nor to any one else, of my husband's mother, if he had not done so before. To confess the truth, however, these sorrows, which affected me so powerfully during the first two or three months, now appear infinitely more supportable: I know how to estimate them in a more rational manner. As long as it was possible to retain any hope of finding a heart among the whimsicalities of the most extraordinary disposition, I tormented myself in endeavouring to gain her favour, and was distressed beyond measure at my  
want

want of success. Now that I see in a proper point of view, a selfish and fantastical being, who is governed solely by the spirit of contradiction, who never enjoyed any thing but the pleasure of tormenting others by her caprices, who triumphs at the death of two children, whose souls she steeped in bitterness, who would smile at that of all of us, and who scarcely takes any pains to conceal her sentiments, I feel my affliction converted into indifference, and almost into pity; and my fits of indignation and hatred are become short and unfrequent. Every thing considered, it was, nevertheless, wise to come and to stay here: the health of our child requires it more urgently than we imagined before our arrival. You will also believe, my good friend, we cannot possess great blessings, without purchasing them at the expence of a few troubles. This nether world would be a perfect paradise, if, with a husband such and so dear to me, as mine, I had nothing else but subjects of satisfaction.

December 1.

I HAVE received your epistles, and make a jest of your morality: you might go far before you would find any one who stands so little in need of it as I do. I shall take your letters to Lyons, whither I am going to-morrow with Eudora, and a man servant, without a maid, because I am to make but a short stay, and because my little apartment will be sufficiently filled by the doctor and my husband, who



who have already inhabited it a fortnight. You may tell the excellent M. Parault, with my best compliments, this same doctor will call here again before he makes his entry into the capital: he must consequently wait with patience till next year.

You ask me, why I have not written you long letters for some time. I will answer you with a frankness equal to your own: in the first place, I have not had time; but perhaps I should have found it, if I had not thought I perceived my letters were a little less interesting to you than formerly. I will not tell you what this idea is founded upon, for I do not know: it is not a judgment, but a sentiment. It is indeed so internal, that I presume, in reflecting on it, you are not sensible yourself of any change. The alteration in you, however, is not great, since you notice my silence; and I rejoice at it. If you had been a woman, I should already have made you some friendly reproaches; but without knowing why or wherefore, I do not feel myself at all indulgently inclined towards you male creatures; and when I cannot believe in a warmth of affection, and in a kindness, at least equal to my own, my sentiments concentrate themselves, and I hold my tongue as a thing of course. Perhaps this will appear to you to be rather haughty than generous, and not consistent with the frankness of friendship. I cannot account for it; but so it is.

December

December 22.

WHY, how now, my good friend! you are in a terrible passion! will you be pleased to tell me why? You men are whimsical creatures: you clamour dreadfully whenever you are told the truth, and at last confess that it is fully proved.

Have I scolded you? Have I made any complaint? I ventured an observation, which you confess to be well founded; and it is for that you are disposed to quarrel with me.—*It is no more possible for the moral man to remain always the same, than for the physical man not to alter.*—This is your answer, and the result of your examination: why, who contests either the fact or the principle? *I* had laid down the first, as my own notion: *you* make a maxim of it. All this comes to the same thing; nor can I any longer understand your inclination to reproach me, or your idea that I have deserved it.

Am I then so much to be blamed for the acuteness and justness of my feelings, and for having told you frankly what they enabled me to perceive? You would, perhaps, have wished me to enter into angry and doleful lamentations: it is the most that could happen in a certain kind of connexion; but in a friendship like ours, the tone and colour may be more or less lively, and the nature of the thing remain for ever the same. We shall always find in our disposition and way of thinking the same  
reasons

reasons for reciprocal esteem ; and in our inclinations and ideas we shall ever have the same points of contact, and the same bonds of union : there is then a degree of confidence and kindness which will necessarily subsist without alteration. There remains, for variety, the greater or smaller degree of attraction, eagerness, and pleasure, in cultivating that friendship : in this respect the field is wide and open. You were flame colour last year ; you are now of a smoky grey ; while I, who never run into extremes, preserve a pretty regular hue, and am witness to your oscillations without considering them as strange.

Tranquil and sacred friendship has a point of support on which the balance ever rests. The passions, at once delightful and cruel, transport us out of ourselves, and at last desert us ; but sincerity of soul, and propriety of conduct, the confidence of a true and feeling heart, the moderation of a well-regulated temper, with good and fixed principles ; these are the things that insure the continuance of a connexion, whatever alteration it may seem to suffer. These, my worthy friend, assure you that you will find me ever the same. No doubt, as wife and mother, fixed to a point, and satisfied with those happy titles, it is more easy for me to preserve an equability in my intercourse with my friends, than it can be for you, whose unsettled situation must occasion a fluctuation in your affections : accordingly I make a due allowance for

effects and causes, and, at the same time that I am sensible of your variations, continue to be your friend.

By the way, I cannot help laughing at my simplicity in making so particular an answer to a man, who, since he wrote his letter, has been thinking of so many other things, that he does not, perhaps, even know what I mean.

However that may be, I must request you to do me a piece of service with all convenient speed: the matter in question is as follows:

A man of excellent sense, whom I particularly esteem, has undertaken to deliver a funeral oration on the Duke of Orleans; but does not know very well what to say, any more than myself. It therefore becomes necessary to collect facts and anecdotes, to come at the public opinion, to know something, in short, of the habits of that prince, that may serve to give an idea of his way of life, both in the world, and in his own family—something that may be brought forward, that will furnish the means of drawing inferences, and admit of embellishment. Your acquaintance is sufficiently extensive to enable you to pick up some materials. Try what you can do, and send me the result: you can easily perceive what I want. I know your activity is great, and I depend on your friendly exertions.

My good man is returned to Lyons; whence he is to send me your letter which he took for himself,

self, and to which he requests me to say in answer, *that he does not dread any one's reading what he writes to his friends; that he well knows people of great sensibility are suspicious, uncompliant, and sometimes even cruel; that at bottom, however, they are well worth other folks; that you are very much of that stamp, as well as himself; and it is, no doubt, on that account he loves you.* If by chance he be in the right, and if your letter, which I take to be an answer to mine, prove entirely for him, you will not fail to hear of it in pretty plain terms.

Villefranche, Jan. 24, 1786.

WHAT are we to think, my good friend, of your fate, and of our own? I mean of the changes that ere this have taken place in your department, and of the little haste you are in to inform us of them, as far as you are personally concerned. Do you suppose we no longer feel sufficiently interested in that respect, to look upon you as bound to send us such information? On what can an error so injurious to our friendship be founded? I cannot, indeed, believe it exists. But how are we to account for your silence? Assuredly, after what you have already intimated to us, you must have known for some time, what you have to expect from changes, in which your interest could not but be at stake.

If any thing unpleasant have resulted from them, why have you not unbosomed yourself to your  
 N 2 friends?



friends? If not, as I am more inclined to persuade myself, how have you had the heart to leave us so long in suspense?

In a word, whatever may have happened, and however you may be, write to us, and do not reduce us to the painful necessity of inquiring into the cause of a silence which friendship cannot brook.

When you have made us easy on your own account, send us news of what is passing in the capital, and of the Cardinal, of whom in the country we no longer know what to think. I must once more remind you of the notes concerning the Duke of Orleans, whose funeral oration is expected with impatience, while the author, in his turn, impatiently expects the information you are to send.

Eudora grows tolerably fast, and begins to read: her father is at this moment very much engaged. We all embrace you, and earnestly beg you will send us accounts of your situation, of yourself, of yourself again, and of yourself above every thing. Adieu!—Do not forget friends whose temper of mind, and situation, make them very unlikely to change the sentiments they have felt for you so long.

February 20.

THIS Paris is an abyss, in which it seems to me friendship itself and remembrance are swallowed up. We hear no more of you, than if you were dead. Even to the very doctor, who is  
obstinately

obstinately silent also : I see plainly the capital spoils you all. Well, go on in your own way ; and only answer when you are spoken to ; for that appears to me to be all you are capable of at present.

In the midst of your business and your amusements, in the midst of your changes of administration, court intrigues, academical cabals, scientific discoveries, and learned trifles, shall I venture to entertain you with an account of our pleasures ? That would be playing the rustic with a vengeance ! We dance, sing, eat, and drink here, however, as well as in town ; but instead of entering the lists of argument against all challengers, we only reason in the study, by way of diversion.

I will not tell you that we still love you, before I know whether you are worthy of our affection : I postpone doing so to my next.

February 3.

WHY, upon my word, you begin to be edifying : a man who proves a thing certainly deserves some consideration. But a *penitent* !—that does not sound well ; and really, though I am sorry to say it, you have very much the air of one. However, in the midst of your grave and censor-like style, a certain something is perceptible, which looks like spite and malice, and renders you a little more amiable. For this once then let every

thing be forgotten, and let us converse like reasonable people.

I am very glad you are reading De Lolme, and think that he must please you much, especially considering the objects of comparison you have chosen.

But do you know that Massachuffets is a very barbarous name, and that a man of fashion was never known to utter such a word when saying soft things to one of the fair sex? I have heard of a lady who was so shocked at the sound of Transylvania, which was quite new to her, that she desired the impertinent fellow who pronounced it to leave the room. As to me, I am so good-natured, and am so pleased at your not knowing what to say, that I forgive you every thing else.

You wish me to give you some account of Eudora, who grows tall, reads fluently, recites verses of my composition to her father, blushes up to the eyes, coaxes and wheedles as cunningly as if she were already ten years of age—but I must not tell you every thing either. I shall therefore conclude by confessing, that being still a cockney (*badaude*), I cannot help feeling myself concerned in the welfare of the inhabitants of your great town, and that I sometimes love you in spite of every thing.

March

March 17.

WE never feel more strongly that we are your friends, than at the moments when you are afflicted. The little you have told me, makes me uneasy. You speak of bad news, but without unbosoming yourself: you are in bad health and in bad spirits, and you content yourself with saying so, without giving way, I will not say to confidence only, but to the effusions of friendship. Do you no longer then think of ours? Is it no longer dear to you? The tone of indifference in which you write, is calculated to give us pain, at the same time that we are tormented by your affliction.

Write, and explain yourself: we shall be uneasy till we have further accounts from you, and are waiting for them with impatience. I only write to request that we may hear from you. Our friend is just come in, after getting tolerably wet—Believe me, you occupy the thoughts of us all. Adieu, my good friend! recline yourself sometimes on the bosom of that friendship which has united the whole of us for ever. We embrace you with more tenderness than I can find words to express.

May 3.

THE resemblance between us is but small; for I am going to love you a little more than ever; my good man is set off, and every thing about him is become more interesting in my eyes. He will soon



be in your presence ; you will see him ; you will renew the compact of sacred friendship ; imagination will bring me into the midst of you, and I shall participate in your affections.

To-day, or to-morrow week, the well-beloved of my heart will arrive in your capital. On his way he is to pass a few days at l'Épine and Longpont. Let me hear of his welfare, and your own : you will often hear from me ; and I trust that you will take as much pleasure as formerly in promoting, and in partaking of our correspondence.

I am to go next week into the country with my Eudora, who is still thin and weak, though advancing fast towards convalescence. I intend to pass the whole of my widowhood at the *Cloffe*.—It is in the midst of fields, and by means of the charming spectacle of nature, I shall support the absence of him who renders them more dear to me. You, who inhabit a great town, and many others besides, will perhaps consider these ideas, and these sentiments, as only fit for rustics, or for books ; nor are they less strange in our little country towns, than in your capital. I believe, indeed, that corruption is still greater in the former, where every little passion is incessantly fermenting, and produces its baneful effects without any compensation. The only advantage a small town has over a great one is, that we can get sooner out of it, and may be every day in the fields. Adieu !—While I am moralizing, the clock is striking twelve ; my mother is scolding,



scolding, and ordering the cloth to be laid, the servants are hurrying about, and the child cries: whether inclined to eat or not, I must sit down to table.

Adieu!—I long to hear that you and my good man have met: mind, beforehand, that I join in your embraces.

Clos la Platière, May 12.

IN good truth, you are no better than a cameleon, or something worse. You begin your letter in the style of a *mountebank*; you proceed like a man of *sensibility*, and conclude like a *rake*. Tell me, in which part it is that Nature shows herself?

I should like much to prove to you that my doubts are well founded; but I am not disposed to enter into an argument. I would only wish you to know that I shall not hold myself obliged to you for my husband's constancy; and that if he were only to discover *half a scruple* of fickleness, I should lay the blame upon you. Learn then, in future, to employ more cunning and duplicity in your nefarious projects. You have the air of a mere schoolboy, or a merry-andrew; and though I am no more than a plain country-woman, I could buy and sell a hundred such as you, if I chose to give myself the trouble. It becomes you admirably to say that he ought no longer to love me: believe me, it would become you better to confess that you have forgot me; for he will do nothing  
but

but what is written *above*, as pious people say. As to us women, the case is different—but the rain is over, a gleam of sunshine attracts me, and you must not be angry with the sun, if his attractive force is more powerful than your own. I lay down my pen, wish you a good night, and am going to breathe a little fresh air upon the terrace. Adieu.

May 30.

IN good faith, let it be to either one or the other, you may go alone : I am content with *the man* you know, hold the devil in great contempt, and hardly believe in God ; but a woman cannot write the remainder of my thoughts.

It is very fine, indeed, to ask me whether I love you : pray, is that any business of yours ? It would be almost necessary for me to see you, in order to make you a pertinent answer ; for all truths are not fit to be told ; and if I had continued to bestow my affection upon you, in spite of your being grown a little of a profligate, female dignity would not have allowed me to acknowledge it. Confess your peccadilloes to me, if you can find courage enough, and then I will tell you my secret. In the mean time, I feel myself much obliged to him, whoever he may be, who promotes my correspondence with my husband, and I wish that he may find somebody to do him the same good office with an object worthy of his best affection.

As

As to me, I do not fend you to any body, for I believe that you laugh as much at our *God*, either alone, or preceded by an *A\**, as at the *God-damn* of our neighbours.

I hope that my letter will not find you in Spain, and that you have no reason to be afraid of broiling,

June 2.

UPON my word, I am quite at a loss what to think. You have not then received the sermon I preached to my husband concerning his mode of travelling? You have not then received what I wrote in answer to the pretty billet, which you concluded by sending me to God, or to the devil?

Well! I must return to the latter to tell you, that as often as I am walking in peaceful meditation, in the midst of some rural scene, of which I relish the beauties, it seems delightful to me to owe the blessings I enjoy to a supreme intelligence: at such times I believe and adore. It is only in the dust of the closet, in poring over books, or in the bustle of the world, while breathing the corruption of mankind, that these sentiments die away, and that a *sombre* sort of reason arises enveloped with the clouds of doubt, and the destructive vapours of incredulity. How fond we grow of Rousseau! how much wisdom and truth do we discover in his works,

\* This appears to be an allusion to the valediction, *Adieu*,

when

when we have nature and him for our sole companions!

I bid you *adieu* then, in expectation of the observations, which you promise in the first line, and which in the second you say, you have not time enough to make.

Villefranche, Sunday, July 9.

I HAVE seen our good friend: we are met again; and I am determined he shall go no more journies without me. He was with me in the country, when I received your last letter, the particulars of which I cannot answer, because I left it behind me at the Cloze. I will only tell you, that it gave me great pleasure, notwithstanding the greater pleasure which seemed to eclipse every other—the pleasure of seeing my turtle-dove restored to me.

Your story of the beehives is a very fine gasconade. I inquired after your loss, and your sorrows; and at first you did not understand what I meant, and then you laughed in my face. Whenever you come again with your pitiful tales, I shall take it for granted, that you are laughing at rustics.

Adieu!—Let us hear from you, and believe us ever and unalterably your friends.

August 18.

OH! a great deal worse than giddy—why, you are inconsiderate, impertinent—I know not what.

How

How is it possible that you can ever expect me to pardon you, for having made me lose my time in copying the most tiresome things in the world? Copy!—copy!—I copy! why, it is a degradation, a profanation; it is sinning against all the laws of taste. It becomes you well, after this, to go snuffing the wind, and strutting along; you, an interloper in the capital, whence I carried away a great part of what was good for any thing. Do not you know that I have upon my toilet both pens and journals, and, moreover, verses to Iris; that I can talk of my country-house, of my domestics, and of the stupidity of the town at this time of the year; that I can pronounce sentence upon new books, fall in love with a work upon the report of the editor of the Journal of Paris, pay visits, talk nonsense, listen to the same, and so on? Is not that the utmost effort of the wit and art of the elegant women in the great world?

Go your ways, young gentleman, you are not clever enough as yet for a *persiflage*, nor impudent enough for fashionable airs and graces. You have not even levity enough to encourage an experienced woman to undertake your education, without a risk of exposing herself. Go your ways, pick up insects, dispute with the learned about a snail's horns, or the colour of a beetle's wings; but as to the ladies, all you are good for is, to give them the vapours.

I am



I am much obliged to the amiable family of the Audrans for their remembrance ; tell them so when you see them, and say a thousand kind things in my name.

Villefranche, Nov. 10.

ALSO by my fire-side ; but at eleven in the morning, after a quiet night, and the various cares of the morning, my husband at his desk, my girl knitting, and I chatting with the former, overlooking the latter's work, enjoying my warm and comfortable situation, in the midst of my dear little family, and writing to a friend, while the snow is falling upon so many wretched beings, overwhelmed with poverty and affliction, I compassionate their miserable fate ; I revert with pleasure to my own, and at this moment make no account of the unpleasant connexions and circumstances that sometimes seem to detract from my felicity. I rejoice at being restored to my accustomed way of life. We have had at our house these two months a charming woman, whose beautiful profile, and pointed nose, would make you fall in love at first sight. She was the cause of my going a good deal abroad, and receiving company at home ; and was much caressed by every body here. We intermingled this dissipated life with peaceful days passed in the country, and, what was still better, with agreeable evenings, employed in reading out to one another, and in conversing upon the subjects suggested

suggested by our books. At length it is necessary to return to our accustomed way of life. We are alone, and I am delighted at finding myself in the little circle nearest the centre: so much so, that, in spite of pressing solicitations, and almost an engagement to pass a part of the winter at Lyons, I have taken the resolution of not quitting the dove-cot: my good man, however, cannot do otherwise than visit the principal town of his department, and make a considerable stay there; but I shall let him go alone, to cultivate our connexions, follow his administrative business, and amuse himself at the academy. I shall confine myself to my solitude for the whole of the winter, and shall only leave it when the fine weather sets in, in order to spread my wings in the beams of the vernal sun. I smiled at the conclusions you draw concerning what must necessarily have been thought of me, and what may be expected, as to gaming and visiting; and said to myself, This is the way in which our natural philosophers, chymists, and all the rest of our learned men, reason. They set off from *data*, of which they neither know the cause, nor the connexion; supply the deficiency by conjecture; varnish over the whole with a jargon of fine words, and gravely give the falsest results in the world, as if they were palpable truths.

Because upon a stranger's account I went into society, where any one might have seen that I made as good a figure as my neighbours, and have judged  
that

that I must be very fond of home to remain there alone, while qualified upon occasion to receive company, and to do the honours of my house, Mr. Philosopher must needs take upon him to decide, that I have determined to live like other country ladies, always from home, and for ever at the card-table.

Because I am astonished that the child of a man of feeling, and of a good-natured woman, should be of so obstinate a temper as only to be overcome by harsh measures, and because I regret the severity I am obliged to assume in order to make her bend beneath the yoke of necessity, this wonderful reasoner immediately concludes that I have caught the contagion, and that my daughter will soon have an iron collar round her neck, and a clog to her leg. Poor young man ! if you succeed no better in your studies, I pity you for losing so much time. If you had been with me these three months, you would have come at a knowledge of more truths perhaps, than you will discover for a long while to come. In the first place, you would have become acquainted with all the people of note in a country town ; I should have assisted you in judging of the disposition, inclinations, talents, and pretensions of every individual ; of the relation of each to all the rest, and of one to another ; of their plans, duties, and passions ; of the public and private operations of the latter ; of their influence upon important measures, and upon actions the most insignificant ; of the result of all these things in regard to general manners,

manners, and those of private families, &c. It would have been a much more complete course of philosophy, ethics, and even of politics, than what you will be able to make up, in whole years, from your incoherent and scattered observations. From thence I should have carried you to the country, in company with an Italian lady, full of fire, wit, graces, and talents, and joining to all these good qualities, a sound judgment, a considerable portion of knowledge, and an excellent heart; with a German lady, gentle by nature, rendered grave by a republican education; simple in her manners, and combining great good nature with very uncommon information; and with a man of a reserved disposition, but good tempered, witty, and polite. The other personages you are acquainted with. Such is the composition of our domestic circle during the present vacation; to which may be added, a few persons of the neighbourhood, with several originals, who set themselves above every body else. Besides this, you would have entire liberty, wholesome nourishment, passable wine, long walks, long conversations, entertaining readings, &c. I leave you to judge whether your course of philosophy would not have terminated pleasantly:

In the next place, you must know that Eudora reads well; begins to leave off all playthings but the needle; amuses herself in making geometrical figures; is entirely unfettered by dress; has no idea of the value set upon scraps of gauze

and ends of ribbons ; thinks herself fine when she is told that she is good, and has a clean white frock on ; and looks upon a cake, given with a kiss, as the greatest of all possible rewards. You must know too, that her fits of ill humour are more unfrequent, and of shorter duration ; that she walks in the dark as well as by daylight, is afraid of nothing, and does not think it worth while to tell a lie on any occasion whatever. Add to this, that she is five years and six weeks old ; that I do not perceive that she has false ideas on any subject, of importance at least ; and you will allow, that if her obstinacy has fatigued me, if her fancies have made me uneasy, and if her careless indifference has rendered it more difficult for us to keep her under, our pains, nevertheless, have not been thrown away.

Upon summing up every thing, I found by your letter that all the reasoning, of which you were yourself the direct object, was very just ; that you understood very well what was conducive to your present and future happiness ; and that, consequently, you were a better philosopher than three-fourths of mankind. Continue at the same time to be a good friend, and you will always bear a high value in our eyes, and in those of all good men. Adieu !—Noon approaches, and I shall be called to dinner. I have only time to embrace you in the name of the whole family, Eudora included, who still remembers you, or your name.

*Clos*



*Clos la Platière, October 3.*

YOUR fervent prayers have recalled me from the abode of shadows, and I can once more converse with the living. I did not lose sight of you in the other world; but I saw you only in the distance, like those fleeting clouds which appear upon, and are hardly distinguishable from the horizon. Your orisons, and your efforts to attract attention, brought me back to you worldly folks with additional experience. When I had inhabited only one planet, I thought it was possible to cultivate the acquaintance of its inhabitants, without injury to our intercourse with the men of another. But I plainly perceive that it is not the case; and that Proserpine was in the right to divide the year alternately between Pluto and Ceres. As long as I remained in the study, nailed down to my desk, you heard from me often, and could judge of my way of life, and perhaps of my heart, by my correspondence; but as long as that correspondence was kept up with spirit, the people in our neighbourhood, and of our town, looked upon me as a hermit, who could only converse with the dead, and who disdained all commerce with her fellow-creatures. I laid down my pen; suspended my literary labours; walked forth from my museum; mixed in the world; and suffered it to approach me; talked, ate, danced, and laughed, like other people, with every body that came in my way; and then my neighbours perceived that I was neither an owl, nor a constella-

tion, nor a female pedant ; but a being both tolerable and tolerant ; while you, on the other hand, thought me dead. I am about to resume my studies, to return to my solitude, and expect to hear you alter your note once more.

What have *you* been doing all the while ? You have, no doubt, increased the sum of your knowledge ; but have you augmented your strength of mind, so as to take mankind as you find them, the world as it goes, and fortune in whatever shape she may present herself ? As to me, I am in such a state as no longer to care about any thing that may contribute to that end. This you will say is easy for a person whose nest is feathered ; and who has a mate to help her philosophize, and the rest of it ; but there are a number of circumstances and things which are independent of all this, and which have an influence over our happiness: that influence it is that my reason turns to good, or reduces to a cipher.

Only think how *nice*\* (*gentille*) I am !—*Nice* ! this is not saying a little ; for you must know that at *Villefranche*, in the *Beaujolois*, the word *nice*, applied to either man or woman, means the-practice of virtue, the love of study, good sense, activity, &c. Accordingly you are a *nice* man, if you do your duty as a citizen, or a magistrate, or any thing else. You

\* As it was impossible to translate the word *gentille* by any corresponding word in English, so as to retain the absurdity which Madam Roland ridicules, the translator has substituted the word *nice*, which sometimes suffers a similar perversion of sense in this country, and almost always in New England.

cannot laugh more than I do when I hear it gravely said of a father of a family, or of a good advocate, that he is a *nice* man. We are pretty spoken people in this country ! And in that which you inhabit are the consequential, the swaggerers, the Crœsuses, and the great talkers, as much respected as ever ? As to you, whom I think I see at this moment, talking fast, walking like lightning, with a look which sometimes indicates sensibility, and sometimes giddiness, but which never has any thing commanding about it, when you affect to look grave, because on such occasions you make *Lavaterical* grimaces, and because activity alone becomes your countenance ; you, whom we love with all our hearts, and who deserve our affection, tell us if the present *you* be supportable, and the future promising ; for this it is that constitutes the happiness of that age, when the illusions of youth vanish, and the cares of ambition begin.

January 19.

YOUR adulation, my dear friend, was thrown away : my lord and master is not yet returned, and I was not in a humour to be puffed up ; but on his account I feel myself obliged to you for your intention. On my own, I thank you for your agreeable little letter, the receipt of which gave me much pleasure.

I did not imagine you were a Jew in any part of your character ; but I find you not a little of a rogue in your way of excusing your want of memory.

We have had a variety of stories told us here about your Lyceum, in which the parliament interferes, by way of giving Monsieur de la Harpe a rap upon the knuckles : pray is there any truth in it ?

I keep your third page for my well-beloved, who will be sensible of its excellence. As to unworthy me, I like Ariosto's follies better than all the truths of your learned doctors, with their hard names, which there is no such thing as pronouncing.

To-morrow will be one of my happy days ; I shall see my friend after two months absence. My heart bounds at the thought, as much as it did seven years ago.

Eudora gives you as good as you bring, without ceremony, and without malice ; but if you were a hundred leagues nearer, it is possible that there might be a little pouting,

May 2.

WHAT is come to you then, my good old friend ? We hear no more about you : we only receive a few short lines announcing some inclosure, or giving us an account of some commission you have been good enough to undertake ; but not a single word of friendship ; not one of those little articles of chit-chat, which are so expressive of it, because they proceed from the fulness of the heart, and are given with a confidence of their proving interesting. Do you no longer love us ? Have you met with better friends,

friends, with persons who value you more highly, who cherish you more, or are more desirous of cultivating with you an agreeable and lasting connexion, founded upon reciprocal esteem, and similarity of taste and inclinations ?

I shall not envy you the happiness of having met with beings of more analogous minds, who enable you to enjoy the pleasure that results from the communication of your thoughts and sentiments ; but I shall complain of your seeming to forget those with whom you formerly partook of that satisfaction. I know that I have for some time past written less frequently than before ; but I have told you the reason. You ought to have pitied us on account of the multiplicity of business, and variety of cares, that prevented us from contributing as much as usual to the commerce of friendship, and not to have written the less on that account yourself ; but the contrary.

It is by mutually supplying each other's deficiencies, according to circumstances, that we keep up the sacred flame of friendship, of which candour, simplicity, unbounded affection, and indulgence, are the necessary attributes. To proceed therefore according to my principles, I forgive you whatever I may have reason to complain of, and I dedicate to you the first moments, not of leisure, but of liberty, which I can find in the midst of the more peaceful, though very busy life to which I am returned.



We have just passed three weeks at Lyons, when the necessity of cultivating a variety of acquaintance and connexions, and of fulfilling the engagements they led us to contract, did not leave me a moment to myself.

Let us know then what your feelings are: take a solitary walk: you used to tell me, that it was in solitude that you became sensible that you had friends, and a heart; I hope that in such moments we are not forgotten.—Is the revolution in public affairs likely to produce any in your department? Can you devise any project for your more rapid promotion? Or do you continue to console yourself for the contrary by the pleasures of study? They are certainly great for a philosophic mind. I lately met with a man reduced to the state of preceptor, who is happy in that situation, and consoles himself, by study, for a fortune of thirty thousand livres a year, which he either lost or squandered away. Much may be owing to his disposition, it is true: and it must be confessed, that we often give credit to philosophy for what is produced by a man's temper of mind.

October 20.

I RECOLLECT a certain certificate of confession which you forwarded me: it contains an absolution in proper form; and I feel myself disposed to make a return for the favour: good day then; peace be with you. Perhaps I should have answered it sooner, if I had had more time: business on the  
one

one hand, cares on the other, and company into the bargain, are more than enough to fill up the day, and to take away the desire, or the power, of entering into chat with our distant friends: besides—but we will say no more on that subject.

Whenever I have had a few moments to myself, I have employed them in digesting my little tour through Switzerland; to which I do a greater honour, as you may perceive, than to the one I made through England. I have not yet finished it; nor do I know when I shall. Notwithstanding, however, the rain, the wind, the hail, and the cold, which besiege us during our vintage, and prevent its completion, I am confined here for a good part of the winter. You, good folks of the capital, ought to be much edified at seeing one of your country-women set herself down in the midst of the woods, where the wolves are howling, while the neighbouring mountains are covered with snow. But according to you, what signifies the retreat we inhabit when once we are out of Paris? Lyons, or the woods of Alix, are all one in your eyes. What have you to tell me that is worth hearing? Pray let me know how you keep your head in order. As to your heart, it is a good sort of heart at bottom, and would go on very well, were it not for that same head, which sometimes leads it astray. And then the sciences, and your solitude? Have you found any means of rendering them compatible with one another, or do you court them by turns?

turns? Among so many revolutions, which threaten so many persons, does your situation promise you promotion? Now take up your pen in your turn; let us hear from you, and let us strengthen the bonds of a friendship of so many years standing.

October 24.

I AM glad you join me in my detestation of this everlasting guzzling, and these slovenly houses. If I could do as I like, or were alone with my turtle-dove, I would not give a dinner for these three years to come; but would have elegant apartments in town, and a delightful little box at the *Cloze*; but according to all appearance I shall not go to paradise in such a hurry.

The wind which is here called the *bise* (the north-east) is blowing; and I keep a Christmas fire. The lesser veronica and pimpernel are hardly to be seen in the fields; and in the hedges there is nothing but half-blown violets and primroses peeping out from among the leaves. I have met with a kind of insect resembling the little wood-lice, that are found running about in closets among books and papers, only a great deal larger, that takes up its abode in the shell of a snail, exactly as the *hermit*\* does in that which it adopts. It was my intention to go to Lyons next month; but I am prevented by household affairs, and regret it much; for I am

\* A marine animal of the cancer kind.

very desirous of improving my acquaintance with Madam de Villiers: she is the only woman I can find to my liking in this quarter of the world: she is polite, kind-hearted, gentle, modest, like her fortune, goes little into company, is very well informed, and exceedingly attached to her husband, who is much older than herself, and whose labours in the study she partakes of. I do not know if you are acquainted with that grave philosopher; an excellent man at bottom, very stiff in his opinions and manners, tolerably well versed in chemistry, and various other branches of the sciences, and particularly skilled in entomology. He has a very interesting cabinet of insects, collected by himself and his wife. This is almost the only connexion, either at Lyons or here, that has any charms for me. I should, however, have occasion to see in the former place several very interesting persons in various points of view. Business must take place of every thing: I therefore leave you in haste to make up for the half hour I have devoted to you.

April 6, 1788.

REALLY and truly, my good friend, I have been thinking of applying to a third person, in order to learn what is become of you: it is so long since we have had any accounts from you, expressed in the tone of confidence, which keeps up that of one's friends, that I almost doubt whether my correspondence

respondence upon the old footing will be well received.

Have we not a new acquaintance to make? Or do you, who formerly wrote me word that you changed every year, resemble the *you* of three years ago? It is highly necessary that you should let me know; for however long we may suppose the telescope to be, mine does not enable me to see things a hundred leagues off. I can only judge by approximation. For instance, I recollect to have known you in possession of a true and affectionate heart; and as that is a thing which does not easily change its nature, I suppose you in possession of it still, and love you accordingly. But it seems to me also, that you are sometimes in your mode of expression, and in your style, the reverse of good-nature, or thereabouts; it seems to me also, that you do not like to be told of it; but then I recollect that I have paid you in your own coin, when your ill-temper has made me lose mine, and I ask myself in what state things are at present? Is the tinge grown deeper, or is it gone off? I am for the latter side of the question, when I figure to myself the effects of study, of meditation, and of happy inclinations; but I am for the former when I consider the influence of the world, the society of fools, the sense of injustice, and the hatred of prejudices, and of tyranny. I shall therefore continue in this state of incertitude, until you remove my doubts. But  
that



that you may have none in regard to me, I will give you my barometer, as it stands in the different places I inhabit. In the country, I forgive every thing: whenever you know me to be there, you may venture to shew yourself, such as you are, at the moment of writing: an original, a censor, or, if needs must, morose: my stock of indulgence is inexhaustible, and my friendship tolerates all kinds of appearances, and every sort of tone. At *Lyons* I make a jest of every thing; the company I see there puts me in good humour, my imagination grows more lively, and if you rouse it, you must take the consequences; it will not let a joke escape, without sending it back with a sharper point. At *Villefranche* I deliberate upon every thing, and sometimes am a censor in my turn. Grave, and full of business, I receive the due impression from every thing; I suffer that impression to be seen without disguise; and am more than usually inclined to reason, though my feelings there are as strong as elsewhere.

You must allow that I give you great advantage in the game: you know all my cards before I see yours. Amidst all this I do not forget your dissertations, which are not at all in my favour: they take up a great deal of your time, damp your imagination, and do not leave room for the least word of friendship. I no longer know whether your syllogisms are in *baroco* or in *serifon*; and having forgotten Aristotle's Categories, being acquainted with

no insect but the *lady-bird*, knowing nothing of Linnæus but a score of phrases for culinary and medicinal purposes, I am sadly afraid lest our friendship should fail for want of some rallying-point. By way of reviving it, I will speak to you of my daughter, whom you are pleased with, because she puts me out of all patience. In the first place, she has still that claim to your kindness, although she gives me hopes that it will not always be the same; she begins to fear reproaches almost as much as doing penance upon dry bread; she is, perhaps, more sensible of the approbation bestowed upon her when she behaves well, than of the pleasure of eating a bit of sugar; and is fonder of being caressed, than of playing with her doll. What a sad degeneration, you will say; what a fine progress we have made!

She is very fond of writing and dancing, because they are employments that do not fatigue her head, and will make a great proficiency in both. Reading amuses her, when she has nothing to do that she likes better, which does not frequently happen; but she cannot bear stories that require more than half an hour to come to the end: she is still a long way off from Robinson Crusoe. The harpsichord sometimes makes her gape: it requires the head to work, and that is a thing she does not excel in: there are sounds, however, that she is fond of, and when she has strummed an air of *The Three Farmers*, with both hands, she does not fail to be mightily proud

proud of her performance ; and to repeat three or four notes that please her five or six times over. She is very fond of a clean white frock, because she is the prettier for it, and because she thinks it must make her appear more agreeable. She does not suspect that there are rich dresses which entitle the wearers to greater consideration, and likes a leather shoe bound with rose-coloured ribands, better than one of silk of a *sombre* hue. But she would like still better to be running about in the country, than to be neatly dressed, and to sit primming up in company. She has a strong inclination to say and do the very contrary of what she is desired, because she thinks it agreeable to act in her own way ; and this sometimes carries her to great lengths. But as she is sure to be repaid with interest, she begins to suspect that she might do better, and gives herself as much credit for an act of obedience, as we should do for a sublime effort of the mind. Her fair hair takes every day a deeper hue. Her complexion is rather pale, unless when she takes some violent exercise. She sometimes blushes from embarrassment, and is always in great haste to make me acquainted with any blunder that she has committed. She is very strong, and her temperament has some resemblance to that of her father. She is now six years, six months, and two days old. Although she plays a great deal with her father, she reveres him so highly, that she begs of me, as the greatest favour possible, to conceal her little misde-

misdemeanours from his knowledge. She fears me less, and sometimes speaks to me in a very slighting way; but I am her confidant upon all occasions; and she is very much at a loss what to do when we quarrel, for she has then nobody to whom to apply for any indulgence, nor to whom to tell her little tales. We are in doubt whether we shall have her inoculated or not; it is a question that gives great anxiety and occupation to my mind. If it were for a person less dear to me, I should easily come to a decision, for probabilities are much in favour of the operation; but I should never forgive myself for having exposed her to the unfavourable chance, if she should prove the victim of it, and should rather wish that she might be cut off by the hand of Nature, than that it should happen by my means. Besides, I dread the taint of a stranger's blood, which might be communicated by inoculation; an objection to which I have not yet heard a satisfactory answer.

Find me then, if you can, good reasons to bring me to a decision.

Adieu!—I am going to return to my studies: tell me if I have given much interruption to yours. I wish you peace of mind, and every thing that can contribute to your entire satisfaction; and if you be still our good friend, as I hope, I embrace you with all my heart.

Monday,

Monday, April 7.

YOU will readily understand, my worthy friend, that I had not received your little epistle of the fourth, when I wrote you the inclosed. You will therefore take no more than what is good at all times, and will pass lightly over the raillery, by which I endeavoured to provoke you, in order to make you break silence.

I was highly sensible of this mark of your friendship, which made me perceive that I retained a greater attachment for you, than I either said or thought I did. Tell me then what are your subjects of sorrow: nobody will more readily share them than ourselves. I have perfectly made up my mind as to all uneasiness about the place; as soon as my husband's health gives me any, I feel that in comparison with that object, every other is nothing.

He is better since he went to Lyons; but his chest is affected as soon as ever he begins to write with any assiduity. I am therefore at great pains to make his labours for the Encyclopedia last as long as possible, by means of moderation and intervals, and to partake of them myself as much as I can.

Villefranche, April 21.

WE have received your agreeable epistle with the greatest pleasure, and with the warmest feelings of friendship. It is not necessary for me to be at the *Glofe*, in order to find it to my taste. You



wrote it at a moment in which you did not stand in need of the indulgence of your friends, and in which they discover you to be every thing that they can desire. You visit the unfortunate, and you endeavour to console them: it is one of the most effectual means of preserving and increasing the native goodness of the heart.

I have also that painful advantage: my nearest neighbour has lost an excellent husband, whom she loved as I love mine. This woman, whose mind is of the common cast, is rendered sublime by her grief; so much does a strong and lively sentiment render us superior to ourselves. She has a great number of acquaintances, all of whom endeavour to divert her attention from her loss. I am, perhaps, the only one who never attempt to console her, and who weep with her sincerely: my tears render her's less bitter, and her affliction less grievous.

Our eldest brother set off this morning at five o'clock: pray examine him *lavaterically*. I believe that his pointed nose will please you, and that his mouth will give you some pain: it seems, at least to me, to be at variance with every thing like wit and taste. As to his forehead, I am at no loss what to think of it; but I will not forestal your observations. You know what I wrote to Lantthenas concerning the triumph which I offered him over eldership; pray be of the party; and let the praise of the younger brother, and the care of enhancing every thing that is in his favour, shew  
his

his elder, that a man may enjoy great consideration in spite of primogeniture.

You are very fortunate to be able to apply yourself to a science so agreeable as natural history : I cannot figure to myself a study which agrees better with our peace of mind, or which is better fitted to defend us from those passions that disturb it.

Adieu!—I embrace you.

May 22.

MANY thanks for your news : it brings us a little acquainted with the world again, from which we were a hundred leagues off. I am very much of your opinion, both as to the principles, to the business itself, and to the result that we ought to desire.

We get nothing but falsified intelligence. The journals are garbled, and sent a second time to the press: it is a great pity. My health is but indifferent, and I am threatened with another dose of physic. An ounce of hardness of heart, and the same quantity of indifference, might do a great deal of good to my constitution ; but those drugs, common as they are, are not to be bought, and I should abhor making use of them.

Send me then your journal, if it be not in Latin : as to the fowls, I cannot promise you them in exchange, but I can promise you some pretty specimens of quartz, upon yellow stones, with which our Clove abounds. Is not that still better for a

man of science, although not so digestible? Give us a good receipt to destroy caterpillars, and then you may come, and eat your share of our apples. In good earnest, shall you never be able to make a pilgrimage to this part of the world? We would take you a walk through our woods, and over our mountains; from our terrace you would see Mont-Blanc, which our peasants, I know not why, call The Cat's Mountain, and we would go in a body to visit Mount Pila. Throw off your fetters for a little while, and join us in our retreat: you will find there true friendship, and real simplicity of heart. A woman of Lyons has betrayed me; her husband has done still worse; and between them they have printed one half of my tour through Switzerland. I have insisted upon the cancelling of my name, and of every thing that might serve to point me out, and it has been done; but there are so many blunders, and the censor (an abbé) has so curtailed me, that I am quite stupified at it, and hardly know my own work.

Clos la Platière, June 18.

I SEND you a treasure for a naturalist, but the destruction of our kitchen gardens. You will find in the box that accompanies this, several individuals of a species of insect which preys upon artichokes. These villanous little animals, of a shape somewhat resembling that of caterpillars, have at the end of their tails a kind of scaly mantle, which they

they throw over their backs, and thus brave every danger. When once they set to work upon the artichokes, they devour the pulpy substance of the leaves; the whole plant turns white, and withers; ceases to be productive; and sometimes absolutely dies. We are ignorant, in this country, both of the name of the insect, and of the way of destroying it. They do not often make their appearance; and, if I may judge from the present year, the first in which they have been seen since I came to this part of the world, they never shew themselves but after a great drought.

If it be unknown to you, it is a present I am making you, and I ask in return a receipt to get rid of them: if you can procure us one, you will render a service to the whole province. You will find two individuals, which I surpris'd, in a different shape; they are larger, and in their present dress resemble a wood-louse.

You will be able to judge by some bits of artichoke-leaves, inclosed in the box, of the state to which these little black animals reduce the best of our vegetables.

I have just opened the box again, and find nothing left already of my pretended wood-louse, but a skin of a greenish white. The black animal has crept out of it, and is now running about like the rest, with the mantle, which gives them the appearance of little *prickly balls*.

July 4.

HONOUR to the sciences, and still more to men of science, for their admirable expedients! Are not my artichokes well protected? And have I not made a notable addition to the sum of my knowledge, by learning to give the name of *larva*, to what I designated so well, by that of the little black animal?

You do not so much as tell me what the two perfect insects, *hatched on the road*, resemble, though I had informed you, that you would find in the box two individuals in a new dress. But I have met with some in my garden in a third shape, with a handsome green cuirass, running briskly along, and no longer making me sick with their disgusting appearance, although they fall directly upon the artichoke itself, and pay no further attention to the leaves of the plant. You and your brother must agree as you can about the two bottles of oil: in the meantime I must inform your science, that it is for the use of the human species alone, and that it is the last and most powerful remedy for worms. The dose is a few drops, in a spoonful of any sort of syrup. By these means grown-up persons have been snatched from the grave, after all other remedies have proved ineffectual, and when they have been almost expiring in convulsions. Eudora once took some in a violent fit of sickness, and shortly after voided a very large worm, the only one which she  
ever



ever brought away in her life, and of which the expulsion was the signal of better health.

Perhaps this discovery may be new to some of your doctors, and will be more useful to them, than your preservatives against the *cassida viridis* will to me: this is the way in which I am resolved to revenge myself for your want of knowledge.

I expect your severe critique; but I beg you to suspend it as far as relates to the article Lavater, as I have new matter to furnish.

You no longer say any thing about your men of science, and the intriguers, and so on, that pretend to it: what is that little nation doing, while the great republic is in disorder, and money as scarce in the coffers of the state, as water was in our cistern in the months of April and May?

I have now, however, enough to baptize you, if you will come and see us; and I may venture to defy every thing reprehensible about you, with an element so pure, a site so excellent, and so deep a solitude. My good man is still at Lyons; nor do I very well know when he will come back. My health is tolerable, as long as I have nothing to affect me, or make me uneasy; but my stomach is not in a state to bear without injury the emotions of my heart, or the agitation of my mind: when they are too much employed, the former goes quietly to rest, and will no longer do its office. We must put up with these old servants, who take it in their head to govern.

Adieu!—I have a great deal to do, and I amuse myself with chit-chat. It appears to me that you have dropped your correspondence, since I have been living in retirement. I have only heard once from you at this place, where I have been ever since the fifteenth of last month. Health and friendship!

October 1.

HANG yourself, dainty Crillon\*; we are making jellies and jams, and sweet wine, and sweet-meats, and you are not here to taste them! These, elegant Sir, are my present occupations. The vintage in the mean time is going on amain, and very shortly it will be only in the cellar of the master, and in the cupboard of the mistress of the house, that the grape, and its delicious juice, will be found. That of this year will be excellent; but we shall have little of it, on account of the visit paid us by the hail: an honour which always leaves a dear and lasting remembrance behind it.

Why then do you not write to us? you who have no vintage to attend to; can there be any other occupation in the world beside?

But you are quite lost in the labyrinth of politics, and exhaust yourself in dissertations upon the good

\* An allusion to a letter of Henry IV. beginning in these words Hang yourself, brave Crillon; we have been fighting at Arques, and you were not there.—*Trans.*

to be done, that will never take place. What is M. Necker about? They say that there is a terrible party against him. And the tall devil of an archbishop. He was said to be set off for Rome; but it is now reported that he is in close custody.

May God grant peace to the good, and annihilate the wicked! Devote a few moments to the recollection of your friends at the world's end, who do not forget you, and who embrace you without ceremony, except Eudora, who might already have her objections

How do the sciences go on in the midst of our political convulsions, and our financial distress? and the men of learning, and the great talkers, and the collections, and the courses of lectures, and La Blancherie, and the museums, and the *musards* (loungers?)

We are told here that Necker's answer is ready; but that he must leave the kingdom in order to publish it. What is said of it in your part of the world? We, who think him pretty much of the *charlatan*, in spite of his *character*, have great doubts of the existence of that answer, or of its being good for any thing, in case its existence be real.

Carra's manner bespeaks him exactly what you represent him to be. I should be very glad to be more particularly acquainted with him.

Tell my brother-in-law what I have not been able to let him know, that the Intendant came here to insist upon the registering of the edicts, after  
which

which our bailiwick, though very happy at this little piece of violence, affected to be in no haste to take its measures in consequence. Next comes a letter from the Intendant to his sub-delegate, desiring to know if the court had begun to sit, and pointing out the necessity, in case any difficulty should arise, of informing government, &c. The bell of the town-hall is ringing, and our magistrates are assembling, probably to form a *presidial*\* court.

The grand bailiwick of Lyons held its first sitting on Friday, upon a threat of its being transferred to Macon, in case of any resistance.

But Macon refuses to submit to the jurisdiction of Lyons.

Nevertheless, the little tribunals are upon the whole well satisfied with the revolution.

We poor plebeians, whose pockets will be emptied, without any one saying *by your leave*, were the only persons displeased with this same business of registering, and this formation of a *plenary court*, composed of creatures of the crown.

It appears to us besides, that the right of jurisdiction given to the inferior courts is too considerable. In small places, where gossiping and prejudices have so much influence, the fortune of almost every individual is left at the discretion of judges, very easy to be imposed upon and deceived.

\* In France an inferior court of judicature, from which an appeal lay to the provincial parliaments.—*Transf.*

Let us wait and see—let us bless America, and weep over the banks of the river of Babylon.

Adieu!—We love you as much as ever.

December 4.

COME, now, Mr. Doctor, have the goodness, I beseech you, to let me know *subito*, for that is the way to please the ladies, if the famous turnips, at present so much extolled at Paris, and so much cultivated in its vicinity, be of the genus *raphanus* or *brassica*. Then you will tell me, *en passant*, in what genus you include the *turnip-radish*, which you Parisians eat at breakfast; and then, whether you are acquainted with the *long* and *round* radish which grows in Flanders, and in some of our provinces, and what you call it. Let your decision on all these points be exact and precise: it will terminate very learned discussions, in which you may consider it as a great honour to be chosen for umpire. But let that decision be accompanied by the Linnæan terms; for we have a great many things to attend to, and very few books. Should I be satisfied with your science, and should you notwithstanding be unacquainted with our *radishes*, the most salubrious, the mildest, and the lightest of all possible kinds of food for man and beast, I will send one of them at your head of five or six pounds weight, *long* or *round*, as you best like.

Adieu!



Adieu!—Do not altogether forget your friends of the last century, who embrace you with sincere affection.

Clos la Platière, October 8.

WE hear nothing from you, my dear friend, and yet the parliaments are coming forward, and acting in a most extraordinary manner. Are the friends of order and liberty, who desired their re-establishment, then doomed to regret it? What effect have their resolutions produced upon the public mind? Their mention of the states-general of 1614, their pretensions, their tone, and their language, are very singular.

The question then is only to know, whether we are to vegetate miserably under the rod of a single tyrant, or to groan beneath the iron yoke of several united despots? The alternative is dreadful, and leaves us no choice, for there is no making one between evils of the same magnitude. Though the national degradation may be less general in an aristocracy, than under the despotism of an unbridled monarch, the situation of the people is sometimes harder, and would be so among us, where the privileged classes are every thing, and where the most numerous class is counted for little more than a cipher.

We are told that the principal financiers have entered into a league against Necker: what is that  
minister

minister about? Has he not yet fixed himself firmly in the saddle?

July 26.

NO, you are not free: nobody as yet is so. Public confidence is betrayed: our letters are intercepted. You complain of my silence, and I write to you by every post. It is true, I entertain you very little with my personal affairs:—who is the traitor, that at this moment minds any business but that of the nation? It is true also, that I have written still more vigorously than you have acted; and yet if you do not take care, all you have done will be only a vain parade. Neither have I received the letter from you which our friend Lanthenas speaks of. You send me no news, and yet there must be a great abundance. You busy yourselves about a municipality, and you suffer heads to escape, which are about to conjure up new horrors.

You are nothing but children; your enthusiasm is a momentary blaze; and if the national assembly do not bring two illustrious heads to a formal trial, or if some generous Decius do not strike them off, you will all go to the devil together.

If this letter do not reach you, let the base wretches who read it blush, on learning that it is from a woman, and tremble on reflecting that she is able to make a hundred enthusiasts, who will make millions more.

August

August 15.

IT is not to the citizen only that I address myself to-day, but to the naturalist also. We do not give up politics: they are at this moment too interesting; nor should we deserve to live in a free country, if we grew indifferent to the public weal. But the days are long; people of a lively imagination, and ardent minds, soon draw their conclusions; letters and conversation can only fill up a part of our time, when we are not actors in the busy scene ourselves; nor can we for ever feast upon the same dish. Furs are then coming once more upon the carpet: they are interesting on account of their immediate relation to a part of natural history. There is no work indeed in which we cannot, in some shape or other, introduce and set forth the rights of justice, and the true principles of administration.

We are studying with much pleasure the *Mammalia* of *Erxleben*, and I think we may quote him with confidence: we have, however, remarked, that his own quotations of the different works of Linnæus, Buffon, Bomare himself, and a thousand other authors, are from editions more than twenty years old.

For these twenty years past natural history has been very generally cultivated: it has made a great progress, and we should perhaps run a risk of finding ourselves behindhand in several articles, if we  
were

were to place our principal dependance upon an authority of such ancient date.

We should be glad to know then whether any able naturalist exist in Europe, who has published since that period; and whether you chance to be acquainted with any work of later date, which is worth consulting, and deserving of faith. Communicate to us what you know in that respect, and try to procure us all the information you can. Did Erxleben publish nothing but his *Mammalia*, particularly since he gave that work to the world? And have not some of the learned men of Germany, or England, gone over the same ground since with equal success?

As soon as you have it in your power, we shall expect a satisfactory answer on that head, and in the mean time will beg you to explain to us one of his passages: we comprehend the words, but as we do not understand the signification of the figures, the whole is lost upon us.

It is in page 42, *Naturales hic subesse, ordines generum*, 1—7; 9—11; 12—20; 21—24; 25—31; 32—40; 41—46; 47—51; apparet; neque male conjungi crediderim, 7 and 8; 11 and 12; 20 and 21; 24 and 25; 31 and 32; 40 and 41; 46 and 47.

Fiat lux.—That is your business.

We embrace you heartily.

August

August 25.

YOU deserve a few friendly lines for your last letter, which gave us great pleasure. I can easily conceive how much you must be occupied; and accordingly I do not complain of your momentary silence, as of a fault which you commit, but as of a privation which I suffer. Courage then; continue to assemble: by dint of uniting for the common weal, the sphere of good-will is extended, ideas are propagated, and the public spirit is fixed upon a firmer footing.

Our silly country towns are a hundred leagues behind you in all possible respects: vanity there is so great, that each individual thinks he is grown one half smaller. Every one looks only to himself; and the consequence is, that the whole see nothing but fools. I believe that the honest Englishman is in the right, and that we must have a small touch of civil war before we are good for any thing. All these little quarrels, and insurrections of the people, seem to me inevitable; nor do I think it possible to rise to liberty, from the midst of corruption, without strong convulsions. They are the salutary crises of a serious disease. We are in want of a terrible political fever to carry off our foul humours. Go on and prosper then: let our rights be declared; let them be submitted to our consideration; and let the constitution come afterwards.

We



We shall come to blows: I fully expect it: what is to be done? We must arm ourselves with courage. I will lay aside the sciences, and all the rest of it, to talk and think of nothing but politics. At this moment can any other interest come in competition with our political concerns? But it becomes us to keep in our proper places, and not to rebel against the influence of those about us.

Adieu!—Health and friendship, in unity of heart, as fellow-citizens.

September 4.

YOUR kind letter brought us very bad news. We blushed on hearing it, and on reading the public papers. They are going to patch us up a bad constitution, in like manner as they garbled our faulty and incomplete declaration of rights. Shall I never then see an address of reclamation for the revision of the whole? Every day we see addresses of adhesion, and other things of that sort, which bespeak our infancy, and confirm our shame. It behoves you Parisians, to set the example in every thing; let a temperate but vigorous address shew to the assembly that you know your rights, that you are determined to preserve them, that you are ready to defend them, and that you insist upon their being acknowledged! Without this bold measure, every thing will be worse than ever it was. It is not at the Palais Royal it should be done: the united districts ought to act; but if they do not shew them-

selves so inclined, it should be done by any set of men, provided they be in sufficient number to command respect, and to lead on others by their example.

I preach all I can. A surgeon, and a village curate, have subscribed for Brissot's journal, which we have taught them to relish; but our little country towns are too corrupt, and our peasantry too ignorant. Villefranche overflows with *aristocrats*, people risen from the dust, which they think they shake off by affecting the prejudices of another order.

You will be able to judge of the happy days I pass, by figuring to yourself my brother-in-law more priestly, more despotic, more fanatic, and more obstinate, than any priest you ever met with. The consequence is, that, though we have little intercourse with one another, he contrives to tease us a good deal; and I am well persuaded, that, out of hatred to our principles, he will do us, perhaps, all the mischief he is able.

I do not know whether you be amorously inclined; but I well know that in the circumstances in which we are placed, if an honest man be free to follow the torch of love, it is not till he has lighted it at the sacred fire of that of his country. Your rencounter was interesting enough to deserve mention; and I feel myself much obliged to you for making us acquainted with it; but I can hardly pardon you for being ignorant of the name of so worthy a creature.

I have

I have this instant heard of the proceedings of the king, his brothers, and the queen, with the assembly. They were devilishly frightened ! That is all that the step they have taken proves ; but to believe in the sincerity of their promise of leaving every thing to that body, it would be necessary to forget all that has passed. It would have been necessary for the king to begin by dismissing all the foreign troops.

We shall be nearer the most dreadful slavery than ever, if we suffer ourselves to be blinded by delusive confidence.

The French are easily seduced, by fair appearances on the part of their masters, and I make no doubt but one half of the assembly was moved at the sight of Antoinette recommending her son. *Morbleu!*—A child is of great consequence, to be sure ! It is the salvation of twenty millions of men that is at stake. All will be lost if we do not take care.

Have we not reason to be afraid of freezing, even in the remembrance of our friends, in such severe weather ? Receive this *billet* then as a little faggot to feed the sacred fire, and watch over it faithfully, that it may not go out.

As to us, good country folks, who have nothing but cheering friendship to divert our attention from the bitter blasts that afflict these regions, there is no fear of our neglecting its worship. Join us then, as far as intention goes, in our sincere prayers, and

let us pay homage together to that amiable divinity, at the renewal of a year which adds to the date of our friendship. Are we to have no more of the chit-chat from you, that we used formerly to receive? And does the Latin of Linnæus leave no room for the communications of ingenuous friendship? Adieu!—If to this *oremus* you answer *amen*, we may begin again; in the mean time receive the embraces of all our little family.

Eudora is tall, with fine *fair* hair, which falls down her shoulders in natural curls; very dark eye-lashes encircle her grey eyes; and her little nose, somewhat turned up at the end, gives her already a roguish look.

Clos la Platière, 17 May 1790.

A TRUCE for a moment with your politics: let us return to natural history, to the study of which the country invites. But our ideas concerning it have been so disturbed, that we are puzzled to find our way even with the help of Erxleben.

For instance, I think I have formed a just conception of Linnæus's divisions, of which the *classes* are the first; the *orders*, subdivisions of classes; the *genera*, subdivisions of orders; the *species*, subdivisions of genera; and the *varieties*, subdivisions of species. It appears to me that Erxleben ranges his divisions in the same way: however, when I look for examples, I think I perceive contradictions. His *Mammalia* consist of only one class, in which he has included

cluded 51 orders. The first of those orders, *homo*, has only varieties ; but in the fourth order, *cerevithicus*, I consider as genera the *hamadryas*, the *veter*, the *senex*, the *vetulus*, the *silenus*, the *faunus*, &c. How happens it then that he says, after the synonymy of *faunus*, *barbatus*, *cauda apice floccosa* SPECIES *obscura adeoque dubia* ?

This word *species* deranges all my ideas, and I can no longer understand the author's arrangement.

I should like to find in his *Mammalia* an example to justify his statement of the subdivisions : I should wish to find in one of the 51 orders a genus having both *species* and varieties belonging to it, or to know why the denomination *species* is applied to a division which I had reason to consider as a genus.

Give me the clue of this labyrinth, in which I am lost, and out of which I can no longer find my way.

The weather is delightful ; and in six days the country has undergone a total change : the vines and the walnut-trees were as black as in the dead of winter.—The touch of a necromancer's wand does not change the appearance of things more suddenly, than the genial heat of a few fine days has done : every thing is verdant, and in leaf ; and we can now find a pleasant shade, where before nothing existed but the gloomy aspect of torpor and inaction.



I could easily in this place forget public affairs, and the disputes of mankind: contented with the range of the manor, with seeing my hens hatch their young, and with tending my rabbits, I no longer think of the revolutions of empires. But, as soon as I am in town, the misery of the people, and the insolence of the rich, excite my hatred of injustice and oppression; and I no longer ask any thing of heaven, but the triumph of truth, and the success of our regeneration.

Our peasantry are very much discontented with the decree concerning feudal rights: they look upon the rate of redemption for fines and quit-rents as exceedingly burdensome; and will neither redeem nor pay. We must have a reform, or we shall have more châteaux burnt. The mischief perhaps would not be so great, were it not to be feared that the enemies of the revolution would take advantage of this discontent, to diminish the confidence of the people in the national assembly, and to excite some disorder, which they long for as a triumph, and as a mean of recovering their lost ground.

Preparations are making at Lyons for a camp: send us then brave fellows to make aristocracy tremble in its den. It had been made a question, whether women should be allowed to approach the camp; apparently those who raised the doubt had some treachery in contemplation; but the idea was too offensive, and did not take.

Adieu!

Adieu!--Send us a little chit-chat for once and away.

Clos la Platière, Monday, Sept. 27.

IT was only by Saturday's post that we received your letter of the twentieth, because it did not reach Lyons till after our departure from that place. We had been longing for accounts from you for some time, and we welcomed them joyfully; but your observations concerning public affairs afflict us the more, because they are perfectly consonant with what we hear from other quarters. It is not, however, from the public papers that you think you ought to procure us information: not one of them is calculated to give an idea of the bad state of public affairs; and that very thing serves to render it more complete. This is the moment in which patriotic writers ought to denounce by name those corrupt members who, by their hypocrisy, and their manœuvres, deceive the hope, and betray the interest of their constituents. They ought to publish without reserve what you say of the General. What purpose does the liberty of the press answer, if the remedies which it affords against the evils that threaten us be not made use of? Brissot seems to be asleep; Loustallot is dead; and we have lamented the loss of him with many tears: Desmoulins will have occasion to resume his employment of procurator-general of the lantern. But what is become of the energy of the people? Necker is set off without

without throwing any light upon the abyſs of the finances, and nobody thinks of exploring the labyrinth he has abandoned: why do you not remonſtrate againſt the baſeneſs of that committee which dares to defend d'Artois' debts?—The ſtorm is howling; the knaves throw aſide the mask; the bad ſide triumphs, and the people forget that inſurrection is the moſt ſacred duty when our country is in danger! O Pariſians! how much do you ſtill reſemble that ſickle people whoſe *efferveſcence* was falſely ſtyled enthuſiaſm! Lyons is ſubjugated. The Germans and Swiſs domineer in that place by means of their bayonets employed in the ſervice of a treacherous municipality, which is in league with the miniſters, and other bad citizens. Soon we ſhall have nothing left to do but to weep over liberty, if we do not die for her. We dare no longer ſpeak, ſay you: be it ſo: we muſt *thunder* then. Join yourſelf to ſuch honeſt men as you can find; complain; reaſon; ſet up an outcry; wake the people from their lethargy; ſhew them the dangers by which they are threatened, and try to give new courage to the ſmall number of members who poſſeſs any underſtanding, and who would ſoon recover their aſcendency, if the voice of the people were raiſed in their ſupport.

I have not the heart to entertain you with an account of the life we lead, and of our rural excuſions. The republic is neither happy nor aſſured; and our felicity is diſturbed by it. Our friends are  
endea

endeavouring to make profelytes with a zeal which would be attended with success, if they could preach for any length of time in the same place.

December 20.

GET a decree passed declaratory of the way in which ministers are to be made responsible; get a bridle put in the mouth of the executive power; and hasten the organization of the national guards. A hundred thousand Austrians are assembling on your frontiers; the Brabanters are conquered; the kingdom is drained of its specie, without any one's inquiring how; we pay the princes and fugitives, who with our own money manufacture arms to subdue us.—Death and destruction! What signifies your being Parisians? Why, you cannot see to the end of your noses, or else you want vigour to make your assembly get on! It was not our representatives who brought about the revolution: take away a dozen or so, and the rest are beneath it.—It was the *public opinion*; it was the *people*, who are always in the right, when that opinion is properly directed. It is Paris that is the seat of that opinion. Finish then your work, or expect to see it watered with your blood.

Adieu!—Your fellow-citizen and friend, in life, and in death.

29 January 1791.

I WEEP for the blood that has been spilt: it is impossible to be too sparing of that of our fellow-creatures! But I am very glad that there are dangers. I do not see any thing else capable of goading you on. The fermentation prevails throughout France, it fluctuates along with external measures; the public force is not organized; and Paris has not yet sufficiently influenced the assembly to oblige it to do every thing it ought!

I expect vigorous resolutions from your sections; if they deceive my expectation, I shall think myself doomed to weep over the ruins of Carthage, and though continuing to preach liberty, I shall despair of seeing it established in my unfortunate country. Lay aside your natural history, and every other science, except that of becoming a man, and diffusing public spirit.

I have heard Lanthenas say, that members of the assembly went to study botany in the Garden of Plants: good God! and you did not make them ashamed of themselves! And those worthy citizens, who see with pain corruption surrounding them, do not rise up with energy to oppose its progress! do not follow it through all its ramifications! do not call upon public opinion to stop the torrent! Is this the way in which they shew their courage? Is this the way in which they do their duty?

Why



Why do you not put them in mind of it? If I perceived the smallest intrigue directed against the welfare of my country, I would hasten to denounce it to all the world.

The wise shut their eyes against the faults or the foibles of a private individual; but the citizen ought not to forgive his own father, when the public weal is at stake.

It is easy to see that these good quiet men did not admire Brutus, till the revolution had brought him into fashion.

Bestir yourselves, and may we hear at one and the same time of your efforts, and of your success.

Lyons, February 7.

I AM told that you are playing the *Rodomont*, and that you write fine things to puff off the Parisians and yourself, but that no effects follow. It is certain that the armaments which you get decreed are highly ridiculous, while our national guards remain every where unorganized, unexercised, and without arms. It is very fine, to be sure, to reckon twenty-five millions of men, among whom there are not three hundred thousand in a state of defence! and in the mean time the enemy's frontiers are covered with armed men; and the great despots, the petty princes, the fugitives, and the discontented of the interior, are preparing for us, in concert, the most bloody scenes. Read the printed address that you will find inclosed, and you will see that this is not a  
time.

time for boasting, but for shewing ourselves by our good works.

You may say what you please ; but as long as I see your tyrannical, ignorant, or corrupt committees proposing trifling decrees, amusing themselves with matters foreign to the constitution, or setting up nothing but scarecrows, I shall assert, that the Parisians are not so brave as they appeared to be, or that they have lost all their cleverness. Shew yourselves men, or I will tell you the same thing to your face.

Adieu!—I shall write to you to-morrow concerning our lodgings. In the mean time we embrace you in return for your kind expressions, and I take my leave of you in order to pack up. In less than a week we shall be with you.

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*Madam Roland wrote me by almost every post from the beginning of the revolution, letters as replete with patriotism as the above; but I only kept those which it was not worth while to circulate. Whether they were intended for me or Lanthenas, I sent them to the latter, who used to communicate them to Brissot, and other persons; and they never came into my possession again. Many of them served to make articles in the different journals, particularly the Patriote François, and were remarkable for their energy, and for the just reflections they contained.*

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST PART.



